

From a social point of view the Joshi occupies a particular position, attracting people from all over the valley and the neighbouring villages and hamlets. It is my general impression that the Kalash being of a kind and communicative disposition, like to meet and come together. In this respect the Joshi being celebrated when the winter is over and the pleasant springtime has come, offers a splendid opportunity.

There can be no doubt that the men, whose obligations it is to perform a great number of ceremonial duties, play a predominant part in the festival. The old Lamtson was, as mentioned above, the official leader who from his father had inherited the position as supreme organizer. Next to him come a number of elderly men who bring offerings to Mahandeo on behalf of their families and lineages. The goat-herds have a busy period with many minor ceremonial obligations at the goatsheds and at some holy places. The young virgin boys, called on-jesta-much, who have the privilege of slaughtering the goats, assist in this way at all sacrifices of goats.

The numerous dances are open to all members of the society, men as well as women, and it is obvious that they enjoy partaking in them. Only old folks and the very young do not dance, but sit or stand around the dancing ground as eager onlookers, and those who can frequently join in the singing and clap their hands in time with the steps of the dancers.

The Joshi has, however, also a social aspect of a more private and intimate character. Visitors from neighbouring villages and hamlets stay with their relatives or friends during the Joshi, and it is the custom on the morning and forenoon of the 10th day of the festival to receive whoever it may be in the homes, so that the Joshi in this way offers a welcome opportunity for smaller private parties.

I have been told that the above mentioned customs hold true for all other Kalash areas where the Joshi is still being celebrated. It is therefore no wonder that the Joshi stands out as the most happy Kalash festival and that the people are seized by eager and joyful expectations as the time for the celebration approaches. The only other festival of the year which can be compared to the Joshi is the Chaumos, the great winter festival. I never got the opportunity of attending the Chaumos, but it is my impression from what I have learnt that the numerous cultic activities, the songs and the dances of the Joshi which deeply touch the hearts and minds of the people give an emotional prominence to this festival.

Being a genuine Kalash festival the Joshi excludes the presence



of all adherents of Islam and consequently visiting Moslems cannot participate in any activities of the Joshi. I myself got the permission to participate because I could explain that I was not a Moslem but a Christian and because I, on being questioned, could state that I had never been subject to the rite of circumcising.

In the wide sense of the word the Joshi covers a series of activities spread over a number of consecutive days. These days may be divided into three main periods or phases: the preparatory or initial phase, the great night of the offerings and sacrifices, and the final phase of songs and dances.

During the first phase, amounting to nine days, the goat-herds, living in the goatsheds, cannot visit their homes, but must stay permanently in the goatsheds. They are busy cleansing the goat-houses and the utensils; some utensils must be used for one year only, being discarded at this time when a new one is being made. The goat-herds also clean and wash themselves thoroughly. The entire purpose of these activities is to make everything oshniru, i.e., ceremonially clean.

Then they go to the shrines of Mahandeo and Sajigor and decorate them with branches of holly oaks. On returning to the goatsheds they milk the goats, using the new and ceremonially clean implements.

The ninth day is a busy day for the goat-herds. In the morning they decorate the goatsheds with branches of holly oaks and eat cheese, prepared from milk from the first day. In the afternoon they go to Shingmou, the hunters' horn altar, situated below the altar of Mahandeo. They remove the old branches from Shingmou, decorate it with fresh branches, cleanse the surrounding ground, and bring an offering of mulberries and walnuts to Shingmou.

Then the goat-herds collect on the ground in front of the Jestakhan and sing some songs in praise of Dramui, a great hunter who lived in olden times. He was said to have erected the Shingmou which he decorated with the horns of the markhor as an offering to Mahandeo.

These songs deal mainly with the markhor. One of them tells how in springtime they migrate high up in the mountains, become fat and dance so eagerly that they stir up a cloud of dust over the Bahuk lake belonging to the Suchi, and taboo to human beings. In between are songs of the Joshi, the flowers of springtime, and a short love song. The last song is important from a historical point of view, because it refers to olden times when Chitral proper was under the sway of the Kalash and mentions some places where they celebrated the Joshi, e.g., the present Belnisar, Drosh, Shishiku, Ayun, and



other.

Although short in time the second phase of the Joshi represents the religious climax of the festival with numerous sacrifices of goats accompanied by prayers for the welfare of the people. This phase begins shortly after midnight of the 10th day and lasts until next morning. Due to the fact that a great many activities take place during these few hours, I shall concentrate on some main points.

Shortly after midnight two virgin boys, standing at the Shingmou, begin to beat two drums thus heralding the auspicious events and summoning the men from far and near. Soon the flames from numerous torches create a phantastic scene, illuminating the valley. These torches are carried by men who in long processions head for the altar of Mahandeo. The leading men of the processions offer cheese to the Jestakhan and to Mahandeo and sacrifice goats or kids to Mahandeo using the ancient prayer: "Molavate deva ...".

Afterwards the members of the individual processions collect in small groups, roast the sacrificed animals over a fire, and enjoy a common meal.

About dawn the groups dissolve, and the men proceed to their homes together with friends and relatives from neighbouring villages. In the homes they meet with their wives who in the morning go to the goatsheds and fetch milk which they are now permitted to drink. They spend the hours from morning and up to about noon with happy parties.

The third phase of the Joshi, covering a couple of days, is devoted to numerous songs and dances on the dancing ground. The people appear in their finest dresses, some have put flowers in their head-gears, and a few men carry ancient ceremonial spears or axes. Hour after hour they sing and dance to the beat of drums with only short intervals between the songs. I counted more than twenty songs, long and short, very different in contents.

The songs do not seem to be arranged in any specific order except for the fact that the last song is long and impressive. There are, however, some recurring subjects which can be used for grouping the songs according to themes.

One group deals with hunting, the hunter's experiences, and especially with those of the above mentioned great ancient hunter Dramui. Another group gives expression to the delights of spring and summer with its beautiful flowers and abundant food. As with many other peoples, springtime and love seem to be associated to the Kalash. The old themes of human love in its various aspects occur now and again, ranging from the pleasures of ordinary love-making



to sincere courtship. A tragic love song, said to have been composed at the times of the early Rai Mehtars, occupies an important position. During his stay at the mountain pastures a young goatherd yearns constantly for his beloved girl who lives with her parents down in the village. By making bonfires he regularly signals his love to her. On returning to the village at the time of the autumn festival he learns that she has died recently. In despair he goes to the dancing ground and sings the tragic story of their love, hastens to her coffin, and kills himself beside her dead body.

A couple of songs which might be called memorial war-songs are of an impressive character. Said to date back to the days of the Kalash king Shalah Shah (i.e., some time before A.D. 1500) they glorify the conquest of some major places of Chitral, e.g. Asmar, Bailam, Birkot, Drosh, the castle of Chitral, etc. These songs and dances are violent and warlike, recollecting the days of brave deeds and the Kalash sway of Chitral. A similar memory of glorious bygone times can be found in some songs enumerating the places where the Kalash people in pre-Islamic days celebrated the Joshi festival. During one of the dances which is devoted to the Suchi, Lamtson murmurs a secret song which the Suchi taught a former dehar who afterwards gave it to Lamtson's father. In this song the Suchi recall the olden times when the Kalash people made offerings to the Suchi all over Chitral.

Summarizing the main traits of the Joshi it is obvious why this festival is so endeared to the people. The Joshi marks the turning point from winter to summer, from the period of scanty food to that of sufficient, sometimes even abundant food. The snow and ice of the winter often isolate the individual villages, but now the people can meet again and enjoy the feeling of being a close community. In order to understand the particular depth and strength of these experiences they must, however, be viewed in connection with the religious aspects of the Joshi.

Each of the three great consecutive phases of the Joshi, the initial, the sacrificial, and the festive, are dominated by different gods and legendary beings whose presence and activities endow the particular phase with spectacular characteristics.

The local centres of the initial phase are the goatsheds, inhabited by the goats and the goat-herds. The legendary beings are here Surisan and Goshedoi, the former ruling the winter season, the latter the summer season. The goat-herds ceremonially replace the symbol of Surisan with the symbol of Goshedoi, in this way initiating the summer season of abundant milk and cheese.



The activities of the second or sacrificial phase are characterized by a magnificent local concentration on the altar of Mahandeo, the great god to whom the individual minor groups of people sacrifice their goats. The invoking persons are the leading elder men who pray for the fundamental blessings of human life, and the responding mythological being is Mahandeo, the divine bestower of blessings.

The activities of the third or festive phase are displayed on the dancing ground. The actors are the whole of the local community, men, women, and children, who for several days dance and sing. Having obtained the blessings of the second phase they now rejoice in the festivities.

The mythological beings occasionally involved in this last phase are the Suchi, or spirits, of the great mountains. Some dancers may be visited by a Suchi and therefore dance in a trance or go unconscious. It is also to the Suchi of the great mountains that some ceremonies are performed during one of the dances.

As for the entire community, the festival exhibits a revived state of happiness reaching deep down into their hearts and giving rise to profound and manifold emotions. The contents of the songs reveal a wide scope of psychological experiences such as: happiness of spring-time, food and hunting, love in its various aspects, pride in the memory of victorious battles and individual brave deeds etc. Finally it may be emphasized that the people is carried by a sincere and strong conviction of the Joshi as a genuine and distinctive Kalash festival.



## THE HARVESTING FESTIVALS OF THE KALASH IN THE BIRIR VALLEY

A. Raziq Palwal

There are three festive rites at the time of collecting fruits and harvesting crops. The first one is the ceremony of inauguration or Dhen, the ceremony of taking off the prohibition on plucking fruits and crops; the second one is the Prun festival which marks the separation or rather the end of the fruits collecting and the beginning of the crops harvesting; finally, the ceremony which marks the end of field work is performed.

At the Dhen ceremony two goat kids are sacrificed to Praba, a deity. After this the collecting of fruits begins. Walnuts and grapes are collected and stored. Wine-making is finished. The shepherds who were away with flocks in the mountain-pastures since the Chaumas of last December return by this time.

Then the Prun Labre, which lasts five nights, begins. During the Dhen and the Prun occasions people wear new clothes if they can afford. On the evening of the first day the young women gather grains from each house while singing the song of Budalak, the virile shepherd. The main line can be translated as follows: "He drinks pots of milk from white goats of the high mountains." The grain is ground at the water-mill in Aspar, the upper village of the lower part of Birir. Here people drum, sing, and dance for two nights. The following two days rejoicing takes place in Bisale, the next upper village. On the fifth day action begins early in the afternoon. Elder sisters and mothers have made flower caps for their young sisters and daughters. These youngsters are dressed as shepherds and the flower caps, suhalek, are put on for them. Cheese in bread is given to each of these dressed figures to carry it along with them. Then they dance along with the grown-up people. Out of a sudden the flower caps of the young girls are carried away by the youths to the gri, the central traditional dancing arena of the whole valley. Men and women all follow them to this place which is situated high up on a cliff. There the people from the upper and the lower valley both get together and dance. After a few rounds of collective dancing the young girls again dressed with their flower caps each dance in single but all at the same time. On this occasion the youths from the lower and the upper valley pick up the girls' flower caps and race to the holly oak tree which stands up on the

mountain side. Then all women retire to seclusion for quite a while. On their return they halt at the entrance of the dancing arena and murmur a secret song. After a few rounds of dancing the festival reaches its end.

In the following days people are busy with harvesting maize, millet and wheat. When all the grains are stored and field work is finished, then the flocks enter the valley. At this time they sacrifice a male goat to Mahandev.



## CHITRAL FOLKLORE

Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk

### Introduction

Every country in the world has its own fairy tales and all peoples have at some time or other believed in the existence of fairies and other supernatural beings.

It would have been inconceivable if a beautiful country like Chitral had not had its share in this culture. The fairy tales of Chitral are numerous and their collection would require much time and energy, but I will be content here if I can write about the different types of fairies and jinns in which the Chitralis have believed in the past and to which they have also ascribed certain natural phenomena. Perhaps these beliefs are remnants of some ancient cult which was prevalent in these parts before the advent of Islam. So the investigation of these fairies may throw some light on the religion and culture of ancient times.-

In former times Chitral was very scantily populated, and communication between villages was extremely difficult. In addition, Chitral is a land of high mountains which are difficult to climb. There are about twenty peaks over 20,000 ft. above sea level. Many of these peaks are covered with perpetual snow and glaciers. For this reason those regions where human feet had never stepped were considered to be a good abode for fairies, etc. Even the tall chinara trees (type of maple) which could not be climbed, offered good houses for fairies.

As fairies and human beings were often close neighbours, they were sometimes on good terms with each other, but at other times they were on bad terms and had to be guarded against. Doctors may ascribe certain 'fits' to hysteria or epilepsy. But those who were experts in knowing the fairies, could treat the complaints and get rid of the fairies by techniques which are, to some extent, similar to methods of treatment offered by psychiatric medicine to such patients today. I am sure that a knowledge of these older techniques will be of interest to those who are experts in this art, and perhaps particularly to psychotherapists.-

My contributions concerning the religion of the Kalash tribe and the Katis settling in the Urtsun valley of Southern Chitral are

separate articles of this book.

In the meantime I have finished a study on different aspects of the traditional culture of Chitral which will be also published in English.

I have already mentioned that one of my main reasons for writing this account in its present form, is the hope that it may contribute material for those experts, such as ethnologists, who are more skilled than I am in tracing the links between different cultures. In this way we may be able to increase our knowledge of bygone cultures which include not only the ancient cults and customs of the peoples of Chitral, but also the relation between their culture and the civilizations which extended from the Far East to the Greek kingdoms of the Mediterranean Sea in the west. The study of the rise and fall of civilizations, and particularly of those cultural elements which persist, albeit in changing form, through time, despite modern innovations, has a special satisfaction of its own. It is also an essential part of our understanding of contemporary social life which is still one of the least explored of the sciences, although it might be thought to be one of the most important.

I greatly appreciate the efforts of Miss Audrey Boorne who helped in preparing the script.

This paper is dedicated to Mrs. Janet Pott who has a deep interest in the culture of Chitral. She has presented a summary of my material to the Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference and has taken an active part in publication of the manuscript.

### Fairies

Fairies are called pari. They are believed to be very beautiful persons. Their stronghold is in Tirich Mir (the highest peak in Chitral over 24,000 ft. high) where the king of the fairies has a golden palace. On Boni Zoom (another peak in northern Chitral), and on all other high mountain peaks, they have their forts and palaces. They are not ordinarily visible so they can visit villages secretly and carry away the nourishing part of different edibles and fruits, and for this reason one has to perform certain acts to safeguard one's interests.

Sometimes they fall in love with other fairies of the opposite sex and marriages often take place between them. Sometimes, unintentionally, a person may injure their children by walking over them, and just as among human beings they may enjoy teasing people and giving trouble to them. People possessed with fairies can foretell the future and make prophecies.

Like human beings they are of both sexes. The daughters of higher status fairy families are called mer zury and are supposed to be very beautiful.

Markhor and ibex are the cattle of the fairies. In each gol (ravine or narrow mountain valley) there is a shepherd called tshawan (shawan). Previously all shikaris ('hunters') used to know their names, because without entreating them they would not allow any shikari to shoot the goats of the fairies.

The entreatment of a fairy was called tshentjik (shinjik). The fairies were addressed as nangini ('mothers'). One would say, "Oh mother adopt me as your son and I request you to give me one of your goats. Be kind and treat me as your guest." I remember the name of the tshawan of Besti in Arkari valley. She was named Nokhtshi Wow (meaning 'ugly old lady'). There was a juniper tree at the entrance to the side-valley and one had to tie a small piece of cloth to its branch, then place a little gunpowder on a stone. Some small pieces of cake were also placed on different stones, the fairies' share. This act was called ishtareik (menaing 'special offering'). It was believed that by doing this the fairies would be pleased and make the shikar ('hunt') a success.

If the fairies were displeased they would drive away the game. Many shikaris relate personal stories that when they aimed at an ibex or markhor ('mountain goat') they saw a woman. But when they lowered the gun from their shoulders, they saw again the ibex or markhor. After repeating this act several times, the hunter who knew that this was a fairy returned without firing at it. But those who fired at such game, usually died later of stomach pain. The gun is also said to misfire in such situations.

Sometimes after killing game late in the afternoon, a shikari had to spend the night alone on the mountain. When the fairies were displeased they called on each other, and very often one fairy would get into the body of the dead markhor and the animal would temporarily come to life again. The fairies did this to frighten the hunter.

It was a common belief that the fairies also had control over the weather. They caused rain and gales. If it rained for many days then a kind of offering was made to the fairies: ghee (melted butter) was put on some pieces of bread which were covered by burning charcoal. The smoking dish was placed in the rain. This act is called wor drek ('perfume to give', 'incense').

In many places on the tops of high mountains small natural lakes can be found. There are large stone slabs on the banks of the lakes. These are the bathing and washing places of the fairies. If stones



are thrown into these lakes the fairies will get furious and cause rain and hailstorms. The same phenomena are observed when the wild flowers are plucked on such heights.

Fairies can very often get into the forms of snakes, cats, markhors and other animals. Therefore one should be careful before killing or injuring these animals.

It is said that Katur, the founder of the ruling dynasty of Chitral, had a fairy wife. There are daughters and grandchildren from her even living today. Because of this relationship the fairies rejoice or mourn when a sad or happy occasion occurs in the Chitral Palace. The sounds of fairies beating drums or weeping can be clearly heard on such occasions. When fighting broke out, fairies could be seen and heard marching with their bands of musicians.

Khangi ('The Domestic One'): In every big house or fort a fairy lives who is called khangi. It never harms anybody; on the contrary it protects the inhabitants from other harmful fairies. Very often it is seen going from one room to another.

In some houses it is heard most of the time beating the rice grain to clean off the husks. At other times it is engaged in crashing apricot stones to extract the kernels.

In olden days after dinner some food was placed in the kitchen for the khangi. If this food was not left there, then the khangi would hide utensils or knock on the door all night long and not allow the inhabitants to sleep.

If a peaceful snake was seen in a storeroom or other rooms, it was suspected to be a khangi. So instead of killing it a bowl of milk was presented to it. If the snake drank the milk there was every reason to believe it to be khangi.

Halmasti ('The greedy fast dog'; verbal meaning 'lightning').

The halmasti fairy is a celestial dog. Its colour is dark red, the legs are long and thin and the muzzle is pointed and long.

It visits the place where a child is born or a dead person is washed before burial. Thus both places should not be deserted for seven nights and people should sit there all night. In the case of a birth, the sitters sing; in the case of a burial, the watchers read the Holy Book at the ablution place. It is harmful for a newly born child to be left alone.

Jashtan ('The Funny Little Fairy', a pixie):

Jashtans belong to a dwarf family of fairies. In autumn one could see the fires of jashtans in Chitral village over on the Tshadock hillside. A light would be seen which was split into two beams, then increased into hundreds and moved about the mountain in lines.

Then all of a sudden the lights would disappear one by one, but just as suddenly the lights would appear again. These lights are also seen in many other places, but always on dry hillsides where marsh gases do not exist.

It is said that jashtans live inside the houses in summer, and in the autumn when people come in from outside to live in the rooms, they celebrate a festival called jashtan dekeik ('The gathering of jashtans' for departure). In this festival all the corners of the house are swept, including the walls and ceilings. People say: "Winter has come. Go to Kalkatak and Nagar (which are comparatively warm places) in Southern Chitral. There are grapes and walnuts there. What will you do here? Go to those places."

In the evening of this festival, very small cakes of bread are baked and placed upon stones by the roadside so that the jashtans may eat them on their journey south.

Jashtans, it is said, are very fond of their caps. If by chance a person gets hold of a jashtan's cap, the jashtan fairy will become a devoted servant of that person and do all kinds of services for him or her. For this reason little boys like to get hold of a jashtan. At dusk in the jashtan dekeik festival, children try to catch a jashtan, and it is said that if one wears only one shoe, puts surma - a black collyrium - in one's eye, turns up the trouser of one leg as far as the knee, and remains bare-headed, then it is likely that one will see a jashtan. In this way the children try to catch a jashtan, on the eve of the jashtan dekeik festival.

Pheruthis (verbally meaning a hissing among smouldering ash):

Pherutis is a very tiny fairy. She always stays near the fire-place. If she is displeased she will cause the fire to burn poorly. Smaller articles missing from a room are supposed to have been taken away by this fairy.

Murghathipi is a bird fairy. It is snow white, and has no bones in its body. For this reason it is impossible to catch it as it will slip out of one's hand. It makes a noise: 'tshiq - tshiq' (zhic - zhic). It will tease men by flying around them and twisting their testicles. But it is afraid of women, because they threaten to tie this fairy with their plaits. It is a bad omen to see a murghathipi.

Khaphesi is deaf and dumb. It lies over people when they are asleep. One feels the heavy burden of its weight and cannot move or call for help. Certain places are notorious for the visits of khaphesi.

Dow (means a giant and also a resinous wood used for torches):

Dow is a devil. It lives in caves and wildernesses, and very often appears in the form of fire. This fire can fly for great

distances. Sometimes it follows travellers at night keeping at a fair distance from them. He is supposed to have one or two horns.

People who suffer from paralysis are in reality harmed by these devils. Such people are referred to by the term dowardiru ('one struck by a dow').

There are some special places where dow are supposed to live. Many travellers see them at night in those places.

Bohten Dayak ('Stone-Throwing Fairy'):

In several places stones are sometimes thrown at random. Although the stones are fairly large yet they do not seem to wound or harm anyone. As this is not the ordinary work of a mischief-maker, people are convinced that it is the act of a fairy, Bohten Dayak. These acts occur very often. Sometimes it is possible to get rid of this fairy by charms, etc.

Chumur Deki ('Iron Legs'):

It is a devil horse which inhabits certain localities quite close to villages. Its legs are said to be made of iron and for that reason when it gallops along the clanking of iron is heard. It frightens by running beside travellers for some distance.

Gor (Witch): There are two kinds of gors: one is an ordinary woman who is a gor when she becomes a witch. The second is a kind of devil and is also female.

The devil gor has a red complexion. Her eyes are vertically set. The breasts are very large and pendulant. One of these she throws over her shoulders, while the other hangs in front. Her heels point forward, the toes backward. Gor devils are said to be very ferocious and will eat any person up with whom they come face to face. But if someone asks her to take him as his mother, then she will pardon and spare him. In many stories the gor wow ('old witch') is mentioned. It is believed that gor wow own enormous vegetable gardens in the far end of the earth. These are so extensive that the waters of all the rivers of the world are not sufficient to irrigate these vegetable beds. It is in this way that rivers dry up.

Gor witches are very common in the Punyal district of the Gilgit Agency. They are called den or rue in that area. Generally they cannot be distinguished from ordinary women as they live like housewives. However, when someone dies these gors look ill and vomit. Women who show these symptoms are suspected to be gor. During the night they go long distances in parties and suck the blood of some lonely person who usually dies one or two days later. The old ruler of Punyal, Raja Akbar Khan, himself related many stories of his encounters with gors. Once when he was alone saying his afternoon



prayers, a party of twelve gors attacked him whom he killed with his sword.

There is a simple test for recognising a gor: if she is asleep, a small blade of dry grass should be placed on her body; should she be a gor she will moan under its weight. It is said that a gor feels the straw as if it were a heavy load. Gors were very common in olden days.

Bar Zangi ('The Huge Monster'):

Bar zangi is a giant with an enormous body. It inhabits wildernesses and caves. Bar zangis are mentioned in many stories. Their strength is superhuman. They eat mostly roasted meat, and can be watched roasting the whole of a donkey at one time.

When they come to their abode after a human being had been there they say: "What a bad smell - I smell the scent of a human being!" In many stories the hero is mentioned as having a wrestle with a bar zangi. It is said if the head of a bar zangi is cut off, it will produce a new head and declare that the first head was not its real head. He can perform this act six times, but on the seventh time he will produce a head made of pumpkin. Should this pumpkin head be cut off, the bar zangi dies and cannot rise again.

In stories the arrival of a bar zangi is described as preceded by wild winds, hailstorms and a rain of stones, etc. If a bar zangi smells the scent of a human being it will exclaim: "If I find you, I will devour you without dropping your blood on the ground and your breath will not rise to the sky!"

Nang ('Cyclops'):

Nang is also a giant. It has only one eye and this is situated on its forehead. Its abode is under water in natural lakes, where it owns big castles and gardens. It also has a lot of wealth in large treasuries of gold and precious stones. In stories it falls in love with some princesses. Very often it captures a prince and makes it a condition of his deliverance that he shall bring the Nang to his beloved princess.

Usually fairies, jinns, etc. are referred to as berio zandar, meaning 'outsiders'. This term is used in contrast to human beings. Qalamdar is a general name for all jinns; it has a fearful ugly connotation and may resemble a fakir. Hog is a name used to frighten children. Kyadarakh is yet another name given to them. When they are referred to in a light way they are called jinspins. The term balah may also be used for a troublesome one.

Sometimes fairies carry away human beings. It is said that they take the person to their castle on Tirich Mir (the highest peak in

Chitral valley), or to some other high mountain. The abducted person is then brought before a fairy king or queen. Two bowls are presented to him, one filled with blood and the other with milk. The fairies do their best to induce him to drink the blood. They threaten him with death and torture should he refuse to drink. He who drinks the blood will become invisible like a fairy and will henceforward lead the life of a fairy. On the other hand, should he drink from the bowl of milk instead, he is rejected and is generally found in some obscure place, unconscious.

I hope it will be of some interest to record here some of the encounters which have occurred with these fairy beings in the recent past. These are not "fairy stories" but actual experiences.

(1) The great Ismaili (Agha Khan's Followers) Pir ('Saint') of Barandis village in Gilgit Agency, had a qalamdar as his domestic servant. His name was Mirza Kachat. He did all the cultivating, harvesting, and bringing of firewood for the Shah (respectable word for 'saint') of Barandis. Whenever he was asked to bring sugar, tea, and cloth, he managed to produce them in a very short time from far away cities. Mirza Kachat was fond of riding. If some guest came to visit the Shah, Mirza Kachat used to take away his horse at night and gallop it the whole night, so that the next morning the guest would find his horse drenched in sweat. Mirza Kachat ate one full load of bread together with a cooked goat. The Shah sent this berio zandar (see above) with his daughter to Mulkho in Chitral where she was married, and for several years Mirza Kachat served in that house in Mulkho. Everybody knows about Mirza Kachat in Chitral.

(2) Once upon a time a berio zandar took up its abode at the junction of the two rivers above Chitral village. This place is called Gankorini ('the windy place'). He used to address travellers who were alone by name and when the traveller answered, the zandar overtook that person and killed him. On account of this, travellers considered it unsafe to pass by that place in the early morning and during the night. So the villagers of Singoa (Singoor is a village near this junction) were in great trouble.

There happened to live a very brave man in Singoor village. As there is a shortage of water in this village, the brave man asked for two extra shares of water from the villagers if he were able to kill the zandar. The villagers agreed to this proposal. So the man took a large knife and a piece of rope and rode on his horse to that place where the zandar lived. He gave instructions in his house that they should let loose his hounds as soon as they heard the sound of his horse galloping. Then he went to the place

of the zandar and as usual the zandar called him and he answered: "Come along and ride behind me." So the zandar jumped up and sat behind him on the saddle. He tied the zandar firmly to himself and galloped off towards the village; at the same time he thrust his large knife into the belly of the zandar. When he came close to the village, his two hounds came out to receive him. He put down the zandar, half dead, and the two dogs finished him. Next day the villagers found the carcass of a donkey on the spot where the zandar had been eaten up by the dogs. The extra share of water enjoyed by the descendants of this brave man is a testimony to this event.

(3) Once upon a time a fellow was crossing Shandur Pass. (About 10,000 feet high and lies on the border of Chitral with Gilgit). It became dark as he reached the top of Shandur, so he went to a small hut to spend the night. While he was lighting a fire he noticed that the body of a dead traveller was lying on the floor of the hut. An hour later he saw a zandar enter the hut, its body covered with black hairs. It had huge teeth and an angry face. It began to eat the dead body, every now and then glancing at the new traveller who was spending the night in the hut. By midnight the traveller heard the sound of some other being approaching the hut, and quite suddenly his dog, whom he had left behind at home, entered the hut. Now both the man and his dog fought the zandar who fled away into the darkness followed by the dog. The following day the dog was found dead next to the carcass of a magpie.

(4) A brother of the Hakim of Shishikoh (a remote valley) was once carried away by fairies when he was strolling by the riverside. As people imagined that he had been carried away by the river, they searched in vain all along the river bank. Several years later a fellow called Tzong from the village of Shishi was also taken away by fairies. After a few days he was found unconscious in some thorny bushes. When he recovered he informed the mother of the Hakim that he had been taken to Tirich Mir by fairies and there he had met her son who was now married to the daughter of Katur (the first of the present royal family of Chitral) born from a fairy wife. Because of the advice of the Lal (noble man) he had refused to drink the cup of blood which he had been offered, and so had been sent back and thrown into the thorny bushes where he had lain unconscious until the villagers found him. He related this story to the relatives of the Hakim.

(5) Once upon a time there lived a man in a solitary house in Mulkho (a district in upper Chitral). His friend, a brave man called Moghol Khan from another village, learnt that his friend was serious-



ly ill and desired very much to have a last look at him. So Moghol Khan went to his friend's house immediately, arriving there as dusk fell. He found that only a few moments before his arrival his friend had breathed his last. Except for the dead friend's wife there was no one else present. So Moghol Khan sent this woman to the nearest village, 10 miles away, to inform the people that her husband was dead. Meanwhile he made a fire and stayed alone in the room with the dead body. All went well until midnight when all of a sudden the dead man rose from the bed and began to wrestle with him. After some struggle Moghol Khan managed to throw the dead body onto the bed again. But a few minutes later the dead body again rose up and it took some time to get it back onto the bed. So this time Moghol Khan kept the door of the house open in case of another attempt of the body to rise and fight with him. After a while he again heard the sound of the dead body trying to get up. So at once he ran out of the door but to his surprise he saw the dead body following him. Instead of running along the path Moghol Khan ran through an irrigated crop field, periodically sinking knee-deep in the mud. The dead man was following him through the mud. However, Moghol Khan managed to gain a furlong's distance on the body, but he did not venture to return to the house but continued along the road to the village. On the way he met the people who were coming to the dead man's house. By this time it was morning. When they came to the house they found that the deceased's legs were covered with mud and they saw the footprints of the two men in the field which proved that Moghol Khan's report was true.

There are many such events which are known to the people of Chitral. These stories help to strengthen their belief in the existence of fairies and other supernatural beings.

#### Betan.

In olden days there used to be persons who knew to communicate with fairies and spirits. They were called betans and could get into a semi-unconscious state of trance accompanied by wild gestures. If asked any questions while they were in this state, the fairy in them would make prophecies which were often correct.

A betan could get into this semi-conscious state at will, although generally some ceremonial acts were performed before inducing him to go into that state. The trance state is termed betan ungeik (verbally meaning 'betan getting wild'). It is said that a betan cannot assume the state of trance in a polluted place. So first of all the trance spot must be purified (oshniru) by offering the sacrifice

of a he-goat. After this juniper branches are burnt on a fire; flour and ghee (melted butter) are likewise burnt on the fire, as incense. Some water is sprinkled, out of a pot, on all sides by the betan himself. During these ceremonial acts the betan is engaged in reciting certain 'hymns' while the smoke from the sacrificed goat and the ghee and the flour falls on his face. After this, amid wild gestures and utterances, he makes his prophecies.

A well known prophecy was made by a betan to Sardar Nizám-ul-Mulk (an exiled prince of Chitral) during his stay in Gilgit. On the night when another prince, Shir Afzal murdered his nephew, Afzal-ul-Mulk, the present ruler of Chitral, a betan announced in Gilgit that a bull had been slaughtered in Chitral and was being skinned in front of the Chitral fort.

There are still betans among the Black Kafirs (Kalash), but they are not so efficient as in olden days. Formerly betans used to exist all over Chitral and Gilgit Agency.

#### Disease Due to Fairies.

Bohtuik (hysteria phobia): It is believed that fairies get into the bodies of human beings. Sometimes this is because they have fallen in love with that particular person. But very often they do it to revenge some injury inflicted on them or their children by the person whom they later possess. Possession by a fairy shows itself in fits. When a person has a fit he acts differently: some people acquire extraordinary strength so that even three or four persons cannot control their wild movements. Others become talkative and even speak other languages than their own, or recite the Holy Quran and passages from other books. In the case of some people two or three different fairies may possess them. They enter them at different times. Their habits and talk can be differentiated one from the other. Each one relates a different story about himself. Some of them are believers in God and religion, whereas others are non-believers. Some always speak the truth, others are liars. Women-folk very often fall victims but sometimes men also suffer. Young people more commonly get into fits than old people.

Mergi (epilepsy): Mergi is also accounted for by fairies. It is thought that Mergi is deaf and dumb so that any amount of chanting hymns, etc. will not be effective. The victim will not talk nor respond to the efforts of the pari khan (the spiritual healer who can cure hysteria). The same kind of fairy is Kodakan who attacks infants and is often the cause of their death. Doctors think that they have died on account of constipation. There are people who are

well versed in writing charms, etc. for such children, or for romance in grownups.

A pari khan means one who knows fairies and is usually an expert on autosuggestion. He also writes charms, prepares talismans and is consulted about obscure ailments and matrimonial dysharmony.

Pari Khameiek: The art of ordering the fairies to present themselves is called pari khameiek. The person who is expert in this art is called pari khan. The learner has to undergo a lot of tortures and hardships, e.g., very often he must recite a certain book late at night, sitting in a spot surrounded by water. The initial step is to take guidance from an expert. During periods of practice some horrible apparitions may be experienced by the novice. Sometimes lions may attack him or a flood may appear to threaten from the river, or, again, a host of armed men may seem to be going to kill him, or a ghost may appear. If the novice shows fright and attempts to leave the deserted place, he will not only forfeit the chance of perfecting his training but very often, in addition, will contract some deformity as well.

Some of the lessons are performed in graveyards or in remote forests. An expert can call fairies at will and request them to bring things for him. But the expert has to observe certain restrictions, otherwise there is constant danger that the fairies may harm him.

Demik: To treat a person who suffers from hysteria is called demik. There are several stages to the treatment:

- (a) the patient is made to sit in front of the pari khan who recites some words which send the patient into a fit.
- (b) the pari khan will then enquire about the whereabouts of the fairy.
- (c) the pari khan will interrogate the fairy and try to elicit his reasons for entering the body of the sick person.
- (d) the pari khan requests the fairy to leave the body of the sick person.
- (e) If the pari khan does not succeed in this request, he will make oaths against the fairy. The fairy himself will falsely give oaths in the name of God but he will not give oaths in the name of Suleiman and his finger ring.
- (f) If this cursing should also fail, then the pari Khan will punish the fairy with charmed sticks.
- (g) In the final stage, the pari khan will make an effigy of a small human figure in kneaded flour. Then he will take a knife and, after reciting some charms, will order the fairy to quit or

otherwise lose his ear. If the pari khan cuts off his ear the fairy will shriek, but if he resists the limbs of the effigy are chopped off one by one with the knife. If the fairy goes away, so much the better; but if he insists on staying, then the pari khan will finally kill him by cutting the neck off the figure so that the patient is rid of the fairy once and for all.

It is said that times when the affecting fairy is strong and cruel then during such a procedure either the patient may die or the pari khan who attempts its removal may meet an ill fate and die mysteriously. It is believed that a pari khan tames a number of fairies or a chief fairy and through them performs various jobs. A pari khan could be of either sex.

### Superstitions in Chitral

In Chitral, as in all parts of the world, superstitions are common. However, contact with other peoples and religions, as well as education, have lessened the belief in such superstitions. Knowledge of them will help to understand some tendencies of the people. It may also help in tracing the origin of the people if compared with superstitions of other countries.

Some of the superstitions may have been created to prohibit children from doing some harmful or awkward acts. Similarly, some of them induce people to perform useful acts. Others may be remnants of some ancient cult which might have existed in pre-Islamic times. Whatever the origin of these superstitions, they have come to be accepted as general taboos.

1. If you see a fox while going on a journey you will be successful and gain profit and favours.
2. While going on a journey or entering a house after a journey, one should look on the face of a lucky person called pathakin. On such occasions, if one looks on the face of a man whose hairs are turned upward, called pharnach, one will suffer all kinds of bad luck.
3. On similar occasions, dogs and cats should not be allowed to come in front of a person, as they are apt to cause bad luck if seen first.
4. While leaving for a journey, the right foot should step out of the house first; if the left foot steps out first, this will induce bad luck.
5. The room from which one leaves on a journey should not be swept on the same day, nor the carpets and furniture removed from it on the same day. If this taboo is not kept, the journey will last for a



very long time. To avoid this misfortune one should make sure that the carpets and furniture are removed some time before the departure of the traveller. Perhaps this superstition was invented to prevent the loss of articles if they were gathered together in haste.

6. On Friday, one should not make a journey towards the South.

7. Tuesdays and Saturdays are not propitious for journeys. If one goes on either of these days, the journey will be full of mishaps.

8. The star Mercury (Murikh - in Chitrali) is a very unlucky star. If this star is before one, the journey should not be made.

9. Some days in the month are unlucky for commencing journeys and should be avoided.

10. If it is impossible, for some reason, to avoid an unauspicious day, then the traveller should go out the previous day for some distance along his route and place some of his goods, or at least his walking-stick, on the path, and then return to spend the night in his own house. This is called safar nisik ('simily of a journey'). By doing this, his journey may be counted from the previous day, and so one can bluff the evil spirits.

11. When the traveller steps outside his door, some dust should be collected from under his feet. This action will ensure his safe return.

12. As soon as the traveller has set out on his journey, a bowl filled with water and containing some green twigs should be set outside the house. This will ensure that the journey will be successful.

13. Ashes should not be thrown out of a house immediately after someone has set out on a journey. This would cause misfortune.

14. Until the traveller reaches his destination, no one should comb their hair, as this would attract bad luck for the traveller.

15. Doors should not be closed after a traveller, because the closed door is an unlucky omen.

16. Similarly fire should not be extinguished just after departure, because the extinguishing of a fire spells ruination of the house.

#### Marriage Superstitions.

1. The bride should prepare tsotsp (a kind of malted pudding) just before leaving her father's house. A little of the pudding should be rubbed against shero thun ('the venerable pillar')<sup>1</sup>

2. The bride should pay homage to shero thun as well as to gulkhan, the hearth.

3. The mother of the bride should not leave the room to say goodbye.

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1) Cf. Hussam-ul-Mulk and John Staley 1968, p.102f.

If she leaves the room the daughter will not be happy in her husband's house.

4. After saying goodbye to her mother, the bride should not look back, otherwise she will frequently come back from her husband's house to her father's house with grievances.

5. The first person who takes a bite out of the isperi banu (i.e. the bride or the groom) will have the upper hand throughout their married life. Isperi banu is the first meal during the wedding - equivalent to a wedding cake.

6. If either the bride or the groom puts a corner of the other's garments under his or her foot during the course of the marriage ceremony, that person will be the stronger during their married life.

7. If the bride's hands and feet are washed and if she then sprinkles the water in the four corners of the house, she will have a happy and successful life in that house.

8. When antimony shows quite black in the eyes, this is because he or she is loved by somebody. (Antimony powder is used as a collyrium.)

9. The bride should carry some millet and sugar with her to her husband's house, so that she may have many children like millet and be happy like sugar.

10. The bride should not be allowed to remain aloof least fairies take her.

11. For the same reason, the groom should not be allowed to go out of the house for seven days.

12. If a bride or bridegroom had the habit of eating from cooking pots (i.e. licking the pots), it will rain at their marriage procession.

#### Superstitions about Shikar (Hunting).

1. Before going on shikar the tshawan (fairy) of the particular valley should be entreated (tshintik), otherwise this fairy acting as shepherd will not permit game to be killed.

2. Some pieces of bread and gunpowder should be placed on stones at the mouth of the valley. These are offerings for the fairies. The act is called ishtareik.

3. While tying a stripe of goat's skin round one's foot and leg as a sort of legging (taching) one should not talk of botik ('to tie') but should say polik ('to wind'). If the hunter uses the word botik his luck will also be tied and he will not be able to shoot the game.

4. As soon as game is shot, the hunter should immediately sing

ghoru, a song in praise of the kill, otherwise he will not be able to kill game in the future.

5. Anyone who shoots batkhar, an animal so young and small that ears and horns are still of equal size, will not be able to shoot another animal for many years.

6. If, after shooting an animal its tongue hangs out of its mouth, this is a sign that the hunter will kill another animal in the near future.

7. If over a period of time the hunter is unsuccessful in shooting, he should prepare a cake of such a large size that he, with his rifle in his hand, is able to pass through a hole made in the centre of the cake. The cake should then be distributed. After this act his bad luck will vanish.

8. It is better to bring the body of the shot animal to the house at night and enter by the back door. This is done so that no one should see the animal and thus harmful publicity and the evil eye will be avoided. Publicity will prevent the hunter from killing shikar in future.

9. Should the hunter see a hare while setting out for shikar, he will not be able to shoot anything that day.

10. Saturday is thought to be a propitious day for hunting.

11. Sometimes fairies assume the shape of markhor or ibex. In such cases, the gun will misfire or when the hunter aims the animal will disappear, or the hunter will see a woman instead of a markhor or ibex. In any event, the hunter should not fire at the animal because if he does, it will bring illness or misfortune.

12. If one sees in a dream a funeral, a snowfall or if one shakes mulberries from a tree, this augurs a good shikar on the following day.

13. If one bites one's tongue, this augurs a good shikar.

14. If something one is swallowing gets into the trachea and one coughs, this is a sign that one is going to eat shikar meat.

#### Superstitions about Children.

1. If a child sweeps the ground, a guest will come.

2. If a boy hits the ground with a stick or bangs his foot on the floor several times, his mother will die.

3. If a child bends down and looks between his or her legs, a visitor is expected.

4. If children do not approach a sick person, this means that the person cannot be expected to recover but will die of that illness.

5. Anyone who has lost many children, should allow a bunch of hair to grow on one part of the head of his living child or children.

6. If a baby does not sleep, it is because he is expecting someone to come in to the house.
7. While a child is being wrapped in swaddling-clothes for sleep, nobody should leave the room as otherwise the one who has left will take away the sleep of the child and the child will not have a sound rest.
8. If a baby yawns, fingers should be placed over its mouth lest a fairy should enter it.
9. When a baby weeps it is said that he is having a dream in which a fox tells him that his mother is dead, but then he suddenly remembers that a short time before he has sucked milk from her breast, so he laughs. This is the explanation of babies laughing and weeping.
10. If a baby looks at his or her hands, he may get ill.
11. Should anyone die in the neighbourhood, some black marks should be made behind the ears of children.
12. A weapon made of iron should be placed under the pillow of a newly born child, lest a celestial dog called Halmasti should enter the room and harm the child.
13. As soon as a child is born, a fairy who causes kodakan (fits of convulsions) sits over the smoke-hole of the room in which the child lies. If people do not keep awake in that room both night and day, this fairy will attack the infant.
14. If a baby is taken on a first journey some small cakes should be carried with him. One cake should be placed by the side of each stream the travellers pass. When this is not done, a fairy attacks the baby.
15. When a child hiccups, it is said that he is working and is thought to be a good sign for the recovery of the child if he happens to be ill.
16. If a child's first words refer to his father or brother, it is said that the next child will be a son; if he refers first to his mother or sister, then the next child will be a daughter.
17. If children are born to several couples in the same month, the parents of the respective children should change their headgear when they see each other for the first time after the birth, or else the babies will have boils.

#### Superstitions about the Body.

1. If the right eyelid twitches, this is a sign that a relative of the father will come to the house.
2. If the left eyelid twitches, a maternal relative will come.
3. If the left hand itches, one will give something to others.



4. If the right hand itches, one will receive something from others.
5. If the right ear is irritating on a cloudy day, then the clouds will clear up.
6. If the left ear is irritating, this is a sign that clouds will gather.
7. If one's lips are sore, this is an indication that one's beloved will come.
8. If one feels some irritation of the lips and nose, this is a sign that someone will die.
9. Itching of the soles of the feet indicate that one will be going on a journey.
10. Irritation of the jaw indicates that a child will be born to a man.
11. If the right ear is hot, somebody is praising that person.
12. If the left ear is hot, then somebody is speaking against that person.
13. If the comb falls out of one's hand, a visitor is expected.
14. If a woman's hair becomes knotted, this means that some man is feeling the absence of the woman.
15. If a woman combs her hair on Sunday, her brother will die.
16. If a woman combs her hair on Wednesday, her husband will die.
17. If she combs her hair in the evening, her mother will die.
18. If one looks in a mirror at night one's life will become shorter.
19. If one bites one's tongue, one will get a lot of meat to eat.
20. If one's nose itches one will get meat to eat.
21. If one snores it is thought to be a good omen.
22. If one has an extra finger this is considered to be lucky.
23. If the first toe of a man is longer than the others, this man will have the upper hand over his wife.
24. If the second toe is longer than the others, then the man's wife will have the upper hand.
25. If all toes are of equal size a man is lucky.
26. If a woman's eyes are very white or blue, she is not reliable.
27. If two persons should by chance stretch their hands to eat one thing, they will live until the following year.

#### Superstitions about Illness and Death.

1. If a patient yawns or sneezes it is a sign of recovery.
2. If an animal is sacrificed after leading it thrice round the bed of a sick person, then the sick person will get better.
3. If while a person is dying one of his eyes remains open, this

means that he is awaiting the arrival of a loved one.

4. If while digging a grave a large stone appears, this is a sign of bad luck for the dead.

5. If a dead body is left unburied in open ground, it will rain for a long time. This is called nashli.

6. If some portion of the shroud of the dead person is found in its mouth, this means that some other person in the family will also die soon.

7. The house should not be swept for at least three days after death.

8. No furniture or other articles should be removed from the room in which death has occurred, least some other person should die in that house.

9. When the house is swept for the first time after a death, an appropriate person should perform this duty (a rayat, i.e., a slave).

10. The sweeper should not sweep with his broom towards the front of another person, as this would be a sign that others would be swept out of the house. So the sweeping should be done backwards.

11. The sweeper should have hard stone, for example a flint, in his or her hand while sweeping.

12. In the place where the dead body is washed, a piece of iron should be buried so that nobody will die in succession.

13. After a funeral party has left the house, a nail should be hammered in the lower panel of the door to prevent another funeral taking place too soon afterwards.

14. If a grave is dug in a new spot this fact will invite others to die and be buried near the same place.

15. If anyone dies on Friday, he or she will escape interrogation until the Resurrection.

16. Dying on Tuesday or Saturday is not good and such persons are thought to be unlucky.

17. In the evening the souls of dead ancestors come to the house so the doors should not be closed at that time.

18. Just before burying a person, cooked food called tsar or ushtrukh should be given to the poor. It would either be cooked rice or curry and bread and distributed among the poor.

19. On Friday nights after death, cooked food should be sent to the mosque for the sake of the dead relative.

20. On the third week of the month of Ramazan (the month of fasting) cooked food should be offered to the poor for the sake of the dead.

### Superstitions about Animals.

1. If a dog has a round mark over each eye, no ghost will enter the house of his master.
2. If a dog makes a weeping noise this is a bad omen.
3. A white spot on the forehead of a horse is not a good sign. If, however, the spot is a large one or so small as to be covered by a thumb, then it is not important.
4. When three legs of a horse are white at the ankle, this is a bad sign.
5. The crying of cats presages the death of a sick person.
6. Should a cock crow late in the afternoon, it should be slaughtered lest the owner die.

### Superstitions about Rain.

1. If the names of seven bald persons are written on a piece of paper and this paper hung outside in the rain, the rain will stop.
2. A piece of flint stone from the grave of a martyr should be placed in the fire. When it gets hot it should then be thrown on the roof of the house. This will cause the rain to stop.
3. If one holds one's breath and writes "K" (an abbreviation of a prayer in which "K" occurs forty times) forty times and hangs the paper out in the rain, the rain will stop.
4. The names of seven unbelievers should be written on a piece of paper and placed in a fire so that it is burnt slowly. This will also stop the rain.
5. As rains are thought to be caused by fairies, in order to invoke them one should place some scraps of bread and ghee on a plate and put some charcoal over it. When the smoke rises from this the fairies are pleased and stop the rain. This is called wor drek (incense).
6. When on rainy days the sun shines for a short time, any person who is born at that time should burn the sunlight with a hot iron to get rid of the rain.
7. If the sky clears up at night and a few stars appear, these stars should be counted and given into the charge of a blue-eyed person.
8. If old graves are plastered it will rain.
9. When stones are thrown into some natural lake on a mountain top, it will rain.
10. If certain flowers are plucked on high mountains, it will rain.
11. Charms may be tied round the neck of a frog which is kept in water to produce rain.
12. It is said that a woman devil churns milk in the sky in a

pitcher. The pitcher falls down and rolls on the ground, that makes the rumbling noise of thunder.

13. Lightening is the lashing of the clouds by angels.

14. If a dead body remains unburied (i.e., uncovered by earth) this causes rain.

#### Miscellaneous Superstitions.

1. If a person works on embroidery during either of the two Ids the needle will prick into the eye of dead relatives. (Ids are Muslim religious festivals at the end of the month of fasting and later at the time of pilgrimage to Mecca).

2. If anyone who urinates on a road, smoke will come towards him whenever a fire is made.

3. If a fire makes a noise while burning, there will be a quarrel in the house.



ANNEX: SOME NOTES ON PERSONALITY AND ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF SHAHZADA HUSSAM-UL-MULK

Janet Pott

The Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk is the grandson of Mehtar Aman-ul-Mulk who ruled Chitral for half a century up to 1892, and the son of Mehtar Shuja-ul-Mulk who also ruled for many years.

He has held high office in the Government of Chitral, and as Chief Secretary to the Mehtar - the hereditary ruler of Chitral - he visited Afghanistan and many Indian States before settling in Drosh as Governor of that Chitrali province.

During the last forty years, the Shahzada has done much to improve the conditions of the people of Drosh, by certain alterations in legal rights and by extensive irrigation schemes which brought fresh land under cultivation and made possible the installation of a small hydro-electric plant in Drosh.

Besides being a capable administrator and a benevolent landlord, the Shahzada has many interests, including sport and horticulture, but above all he is a scholar, well-read in Western as well as Eastern cultures.

Khowar, the regional Chitrali language, was largely oral until the Shahzada developed it as a written language and wrote a Khowar text-book for schools. He spent five years in translating the Holy Koran into Khowar.

For many years he has studied and taken a great interest in the archaeology and history of Chitral and in its culture through the centuries.

As he explains in the introduction to his collection of Chitrali Folk-lore, it is his desire to preserve the traditions and mythology of his country and to bring them to the notice of interested people beyond the borders of Chitral which have led him to the collection and publication of the Chitrali Folk-lore, Proverbs and Customs and of the Kalash Mythology.

The Kalash are a group of people living in Western Chitral who have adopted the Moslem faith but continue to practice their original and much older poly-theistic religion and customs. Their beliefs were once much more widely spread, and some of their customs, perhaps unconsciously, continue to be used in the rest of Chitral.

Although I have personally only had a brief opportunity of visit-

ing Chitral and meeting Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk, I share in his interest in the preservation of the culture of this unique district, and I also share in his delight in telling traditional stories to one's grandchildren.

Some years ago, my daughter and son-in-law John and Elizabeth Staley spent several months traveling and studying in Chitral and Gilgit, and received warm hospitality from the Shahzada and from many other Chitralis. I joined them for a brief trip to Chitral in 1967 and one of my happiest memories of that time was the visit we paid to the Shahzada. With great courtesy and charm he received us in his beautiful old palace at Drosh, gave us refreshment, told us something of his work and of his country and showed us the fruit trees and plants growing in his idyllic garden.

Since then, members of his family have visited me in London, and the suggestion came that these stories might be published in English.

It was a great disappointment that owing to ill-health the Shahzada was unable to accept the invitation to the 'Hindu Kush Cultural Conference' at Moesgaard in Denmark in 1970, where these papers were presented.



## THE FUTURE OF NURISTAN AND KALASH AREAS

Wazir Ali Shah

Various gentlemen including Mr. Yusuf Nuristani have spoken on this subject and have touched almost every aspect of the problem. I have not much to add to it but at the same time would like to invite your attention to some basic facts and problems faced by the people of these regions.

As you know the Hindu-Kush region which is the subject of this conference is a remote area lying at the meeting-place of the frontiers of several countries. In the past, when they were small independent principalities they followed their own way of life which was based on the local conditions. In the first half of this century these areas were absorbed by larger countries, but even then as these larger countries were not fully developed and were not in a position to take development projects to the remote corners of their domains (which the Hindu-Kush region is), the people of these areas went on living as they lived before.

In the recent past however great changes have come over the entire continent. With the advent of Independence, Pakistan, like other newly independent and developing countries, has been taking rapid steps towards developing the land and the effect has even reached the remote corners around the Hindu-Kush. Similarly Afghanistan has been aiming at improving the lot of its people all over the country and the effect of new civilization has reached its own backdoors in the Nuristan area. These countries have also been able to increase the tempo of their development and progress as a result of generous help and assistance rendered by friendly powers in Europe who have been rendering help in money, material and know-how to all the developing countries partly for political reasons (to win over friends) and partly on humanitarian grounds.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it will no longer be possible to stem the tide of change in these regions and it is evident that change may mean, rightly or wrongly, to turn villages into cities, to make roads, schools, hospitals, to wear modern style clothes, to make better homes with running water, electric lights and so on. The old culture and traditions of

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1) The only ambulance in Chitral is a gift of the Queen of the Netherlands.

these areas were however founded on the basic concept that the new benefits of the civilized world or developed world did not exist there and they had to have their own solutions for their problems. It would however be impossible to expect of a Nuristani or a Kalash to continue to live in their old smoky houses, to burn the 'deodar' wood for light, to refrain from sending his children to school or to avoid going to the village dispensary for treatment. But then if they start taking advantage of the new benefits, the old culture is likely to suffer. The witch doctor would go out of business, the young ones will go to school instead of to pastures, a fireplace will have to be fixed instead of the traditional 'kumal' (opening in the ceiling) in Kalash and Kho houses. These are just a few examples and it is evident that with the advent of developed society and the availability of modern facilities the entire way of life of the people of these areas will undergo a great change.

In view of the above I would suggest that instead of "protecting" the culture and traditions, which the people can decide for themselves, we should concentrate on the preservation of certain historical, religious and other cultural buildings along with their contents so that some trace of the old culture, houses and religious shrines etc. will remain for the world as well as the changing people themselves, after they have entered and gone far towards modern progress. As an example I would mention the Old Town in Aarhus which the Danish Government has maintained.

I would further add that both Pakistan and Afghanistan are developing countries and have not enough resources to undertake such schemes on a large scale in a truly scientific way as is required in such cases, because they are obliged to meet the problems of the present day much more urgently than the preservation of old traditions and cultures. The conference should therefore request UNESCO and other official bodies to extend help to the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan in these efforts by donations in cash and equipment and know-how. Similar help can be given by universities and other foundations.



## THE NURISTANI HOUSE

(Pl.2 - 8)

Lennart Edelberg

This lecture will deal with the craftsmanship of the bārī (the craftsmen of Nuristan) for which I have the deepest respect.

Since 1948 I have collected material for a description of Nuristani buildings as a whole, but here I shall confine myself to the Nuristani house; show what is typical in spite of many variations and argue for the establishment of three main types: the PARUN house, the WAIGAL house and the BASHGAL house (Pl.2a).

The typical house everywhere in Nuristan is two-storeyed. The upper floor comprises a main room (āmā), the roof of which is supported by four decorated wooden cedar pillars around the fire place. In Parun and in Waigal these pillars are elaborately carved as they were too in Bashgal in 1890.<sup>1</sup> In the centre of the roof over the fire place it is common to find a smoke-hole built up according to the 'lantern-type' design which is based on wooden squares placed diagonally within each other (Pl.4).<sup>2</sup>

The entrance to the āmā is ordinarily the only entrance to the house. The lower floor, which serves as store room, is entered through an opening in the floor in a corner of the āmā. This opening is usually closed with a trapdoor.

The typical wall of the āmā (found in all three areas) is built of horizontal logs (Waigali: ban'ē) kept in place by vertical poles (Waig.: pik'ū), which are a little shorter than the depth from floor to ceiling in the āmā and on both sides of the wall stuck through an upper and lower wooden clamp with two holes (Waig.: nakur'ä), which have been inserted horizontally into the wall so that their two ends project from the wall. The wall may consist entirely of horizontal wooden logs or timbers but usually in place of every second log there is a layer of stones and mud.

In Bashgal the use of vertical poles stuck through wooden clamps is rare today (Pl.5 below) as it must have been in the time of Robertson, since he does not describe it.

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1) Robertson 1896, p.486.

2) 'lantern-type ceilings', which were never meant to be used as smoke-holes, were popular as decoration in many parts of Central Asia from the caves of Bamian and Tun-huang (Wang Hsun 1956) to the ornate ceiling in the Hall of Supreme Harmony in Peking (Shen Tsung Wen - Ao En-Hung 1957).

The walls of the lower store room is nearly always built of stones. This work is not the responsibility of the bārī, but is done by the owner himself.-

A solution, which may very justly be called constructive, has been found to nearly all the architectural problems of the Nuristani house except for that of the access to the entrance. This access is usually clumsy and quite haphazardly built (Pl.3), probably because of the need to be able to remove it in a hurry if an enemy is approaching. In other words, the Nuristani bārī have neither invented, nor imported the idea of the drawbridge. If a Nuristani ever saw a drawbridge, I think he would clap his hands and exclaim: "That's the thing we have always needed!"

PARUN. The Parun house presents the plainest type. It can most easily be studied in Pashki (Pl.2b), which is built on a steep slope, so that all rubbish slides down the mountain, whereas the rubbish accumulates in the narrow lanes between the houses in villages like Dewa, Pronz, and Shtiwe, which are built in the middle of the valley. These last three villages, therefore, form real *têpes* with the bases of the houses underground.<sup>1</sup>

To reach the entrance of the āmā in Pashki you need to climb the usual Nuristani ladder (a tree trunk with steps hewn out by an adze) from the ground to a rather improvised verandah outside the upper floor.

In Dewa, Pronz, and Shtiwe the houses frequently are apparently three-storeyed because some kind of walled room has been arranged around a wooden louver over the smoke-hole. In such cases you enter the āmā from the (original) roof by means of an indoor ladder.<sup>2</sup>

Between the four supporting pillars and the roof of the āmā two heavy horizontal beams are inserted. In Parun (and in Waigal) these two beams run parallel with the entrance wall.

The Parun āmā sometimes have additional pillars nearer the entrance wall. The beam which they support follows the same direction as the two main beams.

WAIGAL. The Waigal house is principally constructed in the same fashion as the Parun house with the exception that the āmā is always exactly square and has never more than four pillars and, what is very important, these four pillars reach from the floor of the lower storey (ateramgai) to the ceiling of the upper. Only the upper part of these pillars - the part which is visible in the āmā - is elaborate-

1) Edelberg 1972.

2) Motamedi - Edelberg 1968, fig.7.

ly carved.

Thus the ateramgai has eight pillars, four of which support the horizontal division between the two storeys, and the above-mentioned four that support the heavy beams that - as in Parun - run parallel with the entrance wall carrying the roof of the whole building.

In Wama, which in this article for convenience is included in the Waigal area, we find a rectangular verandah outside the entrance and of the same breadth as the āmā. The outer edge of this platform is supported on the cliff by long poles.

But somewhere in the village of Wama and nearly everywhere in the Waigal valley this platform forms the roof of a panelled hay store (berimgai) outside the ateramgai (Pl.3 and 6). The lower edge of the hay store is supported on the cliff by long poles. The entrance to the berimgai is from the ateramgai. But in the harvest season an opening in the panelled lateral wall of the berimgai is temporarily arranged so that the access will not be too difficult for the women who want to bring their hay into the hay store.

The access to the verandah is remarkably primitive and surely not imputable to the skilful bārī of Waigal. To slip round the corner of the āmā from another roof or from the cliff and over to the verandah you have to tread a little diagonal bridge, which represents the climax of what the Nuristani can arrange just at random.-

A single house in each village in the Waigal area has a roofed verandah outside the āmā. These houses are called kantar kōt (Pl. 7 and 8). The kantar kōt was in Kafir time the house of the priest (utā). The roof of the verandah is supported by pillars that are extremely elaborately carved and furthermore carry four-headed capitals in the shape of rams' heads with ammon-horns or similar design.

BASHGAL. The typical house of the lower Bashgal<sup>1</sup> has an āmā with four octagonal wooden pillars.<sup>2</sup>

The special feature of the Bashgal house is that the two beams under the roof run at right angles to the entrance wall and traverse the roofed verandah at the same level and together with the uppermost beams in the lateral walls. Here they are supported by a row of pillars with very fine decorations and by the ornamented front structure of the house.

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1) Bashgal belongs to the Kāmvirī and Eastern Kati area. I never went farther north than Papruk and never visited the Western Kati area drained by the Ramgal, Kulum and Alingar Rivers.

2) cf. Robertson 1896, p.486.

Apparently this feature is not very old. Robertson writes<sup>1</sup> about the Bashgal house: "From the lateral walls of the apartment two large beams cross over, and are mainly supported on the top of the hearth pillars".<sup>2</sup> If the lateral walls are those to the right and to the left when you enter the āmā, which hardly can be doubted, the above description corresponds to the constructions we have met with in Parun and Waigal.

The typical walls of the āmā in Bashgal are built without the use of pik'ū and nakur'ä. The wall is actually built exactly as in the time of Robertson:<sup>3</sup> "It is usually well built, of cedar timber, and rubble stones embedded in mud mortar. The timbers, fashioned with the axe<sup>4</sup> alone, and roughly morticed together at the angles of the building,<sup>5</sup> form a series of wooden frames upon and between which the masonry is built."

It is characteristic of house-building in the Bashgal area, that up to five houses can be built together simultaneously,<sup>6</sup> constituting a kind of "super-house" giving room for several households within the same family. If the owner cannot afford to build the decorated verandah immediately the house may stand unfinished, the beams of the roof projecting into the open air for years.-

The kantar kōt of the Waigal area, about nine in number, in my opinion represent the most genuine and outstanding features of Nuristani architecture, whereas the "super-houses" of Bashgal represent the most sophisticated style of building within that part of Asia.

It is tempting for me to go on and describe the extravagant carvings of the Waigal house and the sophisticated solutions invented by the Bashgali bārī when constructing the details of the big verandahs found in Kamdesh and other big villages, but that would exceed the limits of this lecture.

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1) *ibid.*

2) This is to a certain degree confirmed by the illustration to face page 213 in Robertson 1896.

3) Robertson 1896, p.484.

4) Robertson's own picture (to face p.488) shows a carpenter at this kind of work, but using the a d z e.

5) This is an important point.

6) The houses c a n be added together successively, too.



THE TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF NURISTAN AND ITS PRESERVATION  
Clan Houses and Temples  
(Pl.9 - 12)

Lennart Edelberg

Nuristani villages are of outstanding interest by the way they fit harmoniously into their natural environment, the steep forested mountain ridges of the Hindu-Kush.

The Nuristani houses are unique because of their fine architecture and as examples of the meticulous solutions of an artisan's problems which even enable the houses to withstand the frequent earthquakes of this unquiet geological zone. Furthermore they are beautiful, ornamented as their timbers are with excellent carvings, the style of which differs from one valley to the other.

Many of the houses in Nuristan are so old that they date from the Kafir time, e.i., before 1896, when the population still was very isolated and worshipped their own gods and goddesses, some of whom had Arian names.

All the Kafir temples have apparently been destroyed and their appearance is thus only known to us through the descriptions and pictures in Sir George Scott Robertson: "The Kafirs of the Hindu-Kush".

But the houses of the Kafir priests (in the following text called "clan houses" until such time as we may know more about their function) have in several cases been preserved to the present. Certain religious ceremonies were performed inside them, and we know that in the clan houses in the Parun valley a wooden idol stood behind the hearth between the two hindmost of the four carved pillars which support the roof. One of these statues, the Kafir goddess Disni, from the clan house of Disni in the village Shtiwe has been saved, thanks to the care of Mr. Palwal and Director Ahmad Ali Motamedi, and is exhibited in the Kabul Museum.<sup>1</sup>

The Disni clan house in Shtiwe was demolished in 1963, but as already mentioned, other clan houses do still exist. The biggest one is the Mara clan house in Shtiwe, which is connected with the village tower of Shtiwe, the last existing tower in the Parun valley. The other six towers, which were all well preserved until 1954, have

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1) KK 11 A, cf. Motamedi - Edelberg 1968.

now been completely destroyed.

The Mara clan house and its tower is a cultural heritage which ought to be preserved. The house is private property. Whether the same is true of the tower is still unclear.

Actually the whole village of Shtiwe<sup>1</sup> is characteristic of old Parun and remarkable by its low, compact outline dominated by the markhor-horn-decorated tower. Studies should be undertaken to find out whether the village itself could be saved as a national monument. We can already foresee that this cannot be done successfully unless steps are taken simultaneously for developing rural life in Parun valley. This includes sanitation of the underground rooms of the houses (approximately 50). If life in Shtiwe is not made more attractive, we risk emigration, but without a population which loves its village, the village will turn into a ruin.

In the Waigal valley the problems are probably easier to tackle. Here we find two categories of clan houses: The kantar āmā (only recorded from Zhönchigal) about the function of which we know extremely little, and the kantar kōt. The kantar kōt was - as in Parun - the house of the priest (utā). As the kantar kōts are private property, a number of them have survived, and not been burned or ruined like the temples. The first kantar kōt which was recorded is in Berimdesht/Bergele in Waigal village.<sup>2</sup> This kantar kōt is a double house and between 1964 and 1970 the owner restored the left one.<sup>3</sup> In doing so the old carved pillars and panels were used.

Architecturally the kantar kōts differ from ordinary Waigal houses by having a r o o f e d verandah with a row of carved pillars and a panel wall with shutters opening out towards the valley. The carvings of the verandah pillars and the four pillars in the room behind the verandah (this room is called āmā) are most unusually because of their deep incisions and decorations showing human-like faces. The pillars of the verandah are with capitals carved with two opposing sets of ram's or goat's heads.<sup>4</sup>

You cannot see these capitals without thinking of the capitals of Persepolis. Another typical feature of the kantar kōt is a richly carved, perforated plank supporting the shelf (or the upper and lower shelves) on the back wall of the āmā.

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1) Altitude 2.600 metres. Shtiwe is situated 300 metres above the timber line.

2) Investigation by Edelberg 1964 (still unpublished).

3) "Left" when standing in the verandah with your back to the inner rooms.

4) A similar fresh pillar (copy?) is in the Kabul Museum. Cf. A. Dupree - L. Dupree - Motamedi 1964, p.80 no.25.

The studies of the function of the kantar kōts have only just begun.<sup>1</sup> So we do not at present know whether an idol was situated behind the hearth in Kafir times. I doubt it. But apparently the house had a religious function and was the place to which the villagers would go if they wanted to make a binding agreement or decision.

The kantar kōt in Waramdesh/Prainta in Waigal village is a double house. It is situated on the steep mountain side and the view from its verandah down over the lower village (Berimdesh) and the wild, forested Waigal valley is beautiful beyond description, even by Nuristani standards. The house lies a little apart from other houses, what means less fire-danger in the long run.

Both houses consist of the verandah (krö) which goes uninterrupted across the front of both houses. On the back wall of the krö (i.e. the front wall of the āmā) there are two doors each leading to an āmā. The roof is flat. The lower floor consists of two hay rooms (berimgai) under the krö and two store rooms (aterimgai) under the two āmā. The entrance to the aterimgai is from a corner of the āmā through a trapdoor in the floor. The entrance to the berimgai is from the aterimgai. The walls of the āmā and aterimgai are built from timber and stone, the walls of the krö and Berimgai are panel walls. Under the berimgai this kantar kōt has another store room, and - probably - a toilet room, both of timber and stone walls.

If the roof of this kantar kōt could be made waterproof to modern standards, the whole spacious block could probably be suitable for a local museum and a modest, but most attractive rest-house. The left house, which seems to be unused for the time being,<sup>2</sup> is fit for museum purposes. Here objects showing interesting aspects of Kafir and Nuristani culture could be exhibited. An accession's register, a copy of which should be deposited in the Kabul Museum, should be kept here. Unique objects should not be kept here, but moved to the Kabul Museum. The āmā of the right house is suitable as a rest-house for tourist parties up to four visitors or eight visitors in summer and autumn, when it is pleasant to sleep in the krö.

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1) Investigation made by Jones 1969. Results will be published in KUML

2) In 1970, interviews with prominent persons of Waramdesh were taken about the prospects here mentioned.

## PRESERVATION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL TRADITION IN NURISTAN

Erik Hansen

It is common by heard that we cannot stop development, and it is probably right in so far as every living society is constantly developing; if not it is in stagnation. There was a development from the older stone age to the neolithic times which most of us would call progress. It was also a development, and we might say a good one, when the Roman Empire succumbed after having reached a high degree of material welfare (for a certain class of people) based on an extensive exploitation of a great part of the world.

We cannot stop development, but today, and that is characteristic of our technological achievements, there are many possibilities of influencing it - if we are wise enough.

The great potentials of the so-called industrial development which is now touching more or less all the regions of the world, also Nuristan, are on one side the movement of farm workers from the villages to the towns with such consequences as slums, pollution and isolation of the individual, on the other side establishment of secondary residences and tourist accommodations in the country implying disfiguration of natural beauties and of harmonious settlements integrated in the landscape. We know all too well the disastrous consequences of such a development from the western industrialized countries, whatever it is a Greek island, a Danish village or a small town in the Roman Campagna: the original harmonious community deserted by the young people, dissolution of the social pattern, loss of the popular traditions and decay of the architecture not more being kept in repair. In the next stage of this development we find acquisition of the old houses by townspeople attracted by the beauty of the countryside, the calm and the sane air, but people who has not the cultural qualifications to live in the houses and still less to maintain them. That means degradation and even loss of the architectural tradition. Finally - as the old houses are not sufficient - the construction of villas and hotels, roads, parkings and souvenir shops settled in the attractive surroundings, are bringing along all the bad taste, noise dirt of the towns resulting in the complete distruction of what was originally the reason to go to the country. We can observe some stage or other of this decline in nearly every village of the western Europe. The state of things is not much different in the villages where the



original population is remaining, profiting by some local development. The results of the economical progress are in general not used for real requirements but for status symbols: the chief of the jungle village is the first to paint his hut, the inhabitants of the mediterranean fishing hamlet prefer the variegated confusion of plastic-colours for the traditional cheep white-wash of their houses, and it is told that the first peasants in Denmark who installed water-closets in their farms didn't use them but continued to relieve themselves in the cow-house as before.

In Nuristan we can now see the first windows with glasses made in the fabric in Chaga-Saray and carried up on the back. It means probably that the Nuristanis find their houses dark inside, but it is also a sign of welfare that they can afford to buy "modern" windows, and it is certainly a presage of the decline of the whole architecture, for such prefabricated windows don't fit into the ingenious timber buildings as it is cutting all the logs and thus destroying the connection of the whole construction. And since the fault is scarcely attributed to the window so much desired, but to the house, we will soon see the whole building tradition degenerate and eventually the wood, the stone and the clay replaced by concrete, bricks and lime-mortar, as it is already the case in Chaga-Saray. As there is no tradition here for construction with these materials, we may easily foresee moist and badly isolated buildings, overpopulated as they are more expensive, and following decrease of the health condition, briefly: slum.

Afghanistan who is conscious of its cultural heritage and has given proof of this attitude by a generous contribution to the salvation of the monuments of Nubia some years ago, and by large annual grants for conservation of the historical monuments in the country, is from this year in possession of an important instrument for preservation of the cultural heritage: a protective inventory of monuments and sites, consisting of index cards, one for each monument or site, giving information of the dates, appearance, construction, state of conservation, dangers and possibilities of preservation of each building, besides a documentation in form of photographs and measured drawings. Here is in the first turn thought of the great historical monuments, but nothing would be more natural than to extend the interest to outstanding examples of the traditional architecture, and it would be most important if all the scholars who are travelling in Nuristan would help to complete the index cards for this part of the country, giving thus the responsible authorities a summary of the architectural values included so that

they can intervene in time, by protective measures, acquirements or restrictions.

In this way it would be possible to save some of the most important examples of Nuristani buildings, and this should in any case be done. But no governmental interference would be able to preserve a whole village, if the houses are left and not maintained, or if the architectural tradition necessary for the repair or the renovation is dying out. The proper way to protect the old architecture in Nuristan and its culture as a whole, would therefore be to keep the tradition living by making the existence in the villages more attractive, that means by giving the inhabitants part in the advantages they seek in the towns: a less drudgery existence, medical care, education, cultural activities, or with other words by favoring a harmonious development of the villages without the unbearable back-sides of the towns, and that is still possible in this unspoiled privileged site. Thus the preservation of the traditional architecture is first of all a question of agriculture, forestry and cattle-breeding. Irrealistic would somebody say, but do the monotonous work in the fabrics, the polluted atmosphere, the mental diseases and all the other social problems in the urban agglomerations belong to the realities wanted for by mankind?

A project of this kind can neither be realised through governmental prescriptions nor through large-scale expert assistance, but only through the initiative of the population itself guided by advisers whom they know and in whom they have confidence, and who on their side know the region and are able to consider it from an ecological point of view - in the widest meaning of the word.

With this purpose one would propose a small group of scholars, for instance an all-round natural-scientist, an ethnographer and an architect, to work together in Nuristan for one year with the following programme:

1. to make the inhabitants conscious of the values and the coherence of their own culture and discuss with them the consequences of eventual changes;
2. to help them to develop simple methods for improvement of their agriculture, forestry, cattle-breeding and eventually also the architecture (if windows or toilets are wanted, study the possibilities to integrate them in the tradition);
3. to make a survey of vegetation and of animal life, registrate cultural traditions and objects, and study in general the relation between man and nature;
4. to establish a long term plan of development for the region from

a cultural, social and economic point of view taking in account all the interfering factors and with regard to the general development of the country.

In a world of violent alteration, under the expanding industrialization and urbanisation, the suppression of the traditional cultures means not only the loss of artistical, natural and social values, but also the loss of experience and knowledge of mankind acquired through thousands of years. Nuristan is still one of the parts in the world where one can study the skill of man to create a high culture within the limits of a savage and capricious nature. An examination of the possibilities for such a culture to survive in our times would have a general interest for all the countries in the world, also the most industrialized, where traditional cultures are disappearing.

Having created a technology which constantly affrighten us with unforeseen consequences, such a study might help us to find the deeper values in our existence.

# HINDU-KUSH CULTURAL CONFERENCE

MOESGÅRD

1970

10th - 18th of November

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Erik Hansen, Arkitekt, Kunstakademi Copenhagen, Denmark



## LIST OF LECTURERS AND CONTRIBUTORS

### November, 11th

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF KAFIRS' MYTHOLOGY  
Dir. A.A. Motamedi

THE KAFIR LANGUAGES  
Prof. G. Morgenstierne

KAFIR MUSIC  
Mr. Morten Levy/Mr. P. Rovsing Olsen

### November, 12th

HISTORY  
Asst.Prof. Hasan Kakar: The conquest of Kafiristan 1896  
Asst.Prof. R.F. Strand: Native accounts of Kam history  
Mr. A.R. Palwal  
Mr. Wazir Ali Shah

THE NURISTANI HOUSE-TYPES  
Mr. Lennart Edelberg

CHITRALI & KALASH HOUSES  
Mrs. Janet Pott

### November, 13th

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION  
Asst.Curator Schuyler Jones  
Asst.Prof. R.F. Strand

CLAN HOUSES AND TEMPLES  
Mr. Lennart Edelberg

PROTECTION OF VALUABLE BUILDINGS  
Architect E. Hansen  
Dir. A.A. Motamedi

SYMBOLS OF RANK  
Mr. Schuyler Jones

RANK AMONG THE KATI, WAMAI & KAM  
Mr. Palwal

November, 14th

IRANIAN INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURES OF THE HINDUKUSH  
Prof. Jettmar

THE MANUSCRIPT OF ABDULLAH: KAFIR LAWS & CUSTOMS  
Research Asst. K. Kristiansen

FOLKLORE  
Mrs. Janet Pott

LIFE ON THE MOUNTAIN PASTURE  
Mr. A.Yusuf Nuristani

November, 16th

WESTERN PARALLELS TO THE DEEDS OF IMRA  
Prof. W. Lentz

THE JOSHI FESTIVAL OF THE KALASH AND ITS RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE  
Prof. H. Siiger

MYTHOLOGY  
Prof. G. Buddruss

KALASH MYTHOLOGY  
Mr. Wazir Ali Shah

KALASH FESTIVALS  
Dr. Peter Snoy

HOLY KALASH PLACES  
Mrs. Janet Pott

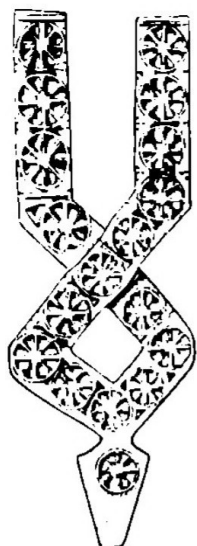
November, 17th

KALASH FESTIVALS  
Mr. A.R. Palwal

THE FUTURE OF THE NURISTAN & KALASH AREA  
Mr. Klaus Ferdinand  
Mr. A.Yusuf Nuristani  
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# HINDU - KUSH CULTURAL CONFERENCE

MOESGÅRD

1970

M. le Secrétaire Général  
René Maheu  
UNESCO  
Place de Fontenoy  
Paris 7  
FRANCE

During the Hindu Kush Cultural Conference at Moesgård from November 10th to 18th, 1970, different aspects of the culture of Nuristan and Chitral have been discussed among scholars who were born and/or have worked in the area. Through an interdisciplinary cooperation light has been thrown on many scientific problems.

The Hindu Kush mountain area is unique in combining primary forests and harmonious indigenous villages with an architecture of high artistic value, and languages and traditions having deep historical roots.

If the rich cultural inheritance of these areas is to survive the effects of economic and social change, efforts should be made to ensure that development can take place in such a way that advancement and traditions can go hand in hand at every level of the civilization of these areas.

In our opinion to achieve this the following steps should be taken:

1. The formulation and implementation of landscape planning, particularly to prevent further forest destruction and soil erosion.
2. The preservation of certain buildings of outstanding cultural value and of archaeological sites.
3. The establishment of local museums in the area, preferably in buildings of architectural interest.
4. The collection of cultural objects from the areas in question for traditional museum display in Kabul, Chitral and Peshawar.

5. The establishment of rest-houses and some modest hotels in houses of the local style.
6. Cultural & sociological studies to be undertaken in selected areas.
7. To develop, in cooperation with the Ministeries of Education concerned, materials for use in the schools of Nuristan and Chitral so that children may be taught the value of their environment and understand that culture cannot develop - not even survive - without being in balance with nature.

The members of this international conference hereby request UNESCO to consider or to forward to the appropriate international institution an application for funds to realize the above proposals, which we unanimously consider to be urgent, through cooperation with the governments concerned.

Time is short and therefore we propose that this matter should be thoroughly discussed in Nuristan and Chitral with local and government authorities so that early action can be taken.

We, the members of the Hindu Kush Cultural Conference Committee, being in a position to draw upon the experience of scholars who have carried out fieldwork in the areas concerned, willingly offer our assistance in this matter. More details can be provided for each of the above proposals.

We request that your reply be sent to the Secretary of the Conference.

Moesgård<sup>o</sup>, November 18th, 1970.

*Georg Morgenstierne*  
Georg Morgenstierne  
President

*Lennart Edelberg*  
/ Lennart Edelberg  
Secretary  
Holmevej 18  
6760 Ribe  
Denmark



## NOTES ON THE PLATES

Pl.1: to R.F.Strand: Principles of Kinship Organization among the Kom Nuristani.

Plates 2 - 8 to L.Edelberg: The Nuristani House.

Pl.2a: Nuristani house types systematically arranged.

Pl.2b: House from Pashki in Parun valley (inverted - the door is actually fixed to the left side of the door-frame). In the floor of the store room there are pits for grain covered by stone lids.

Pl.3: House from Zhönchigal in Waigal. Note the carved pillars that run through two storeys and the clumsy access to the platform in front of the entrance to the āmā.

Pl.4: House from Keshtagrom in the lower Bashgal area. Note the lantern-type smoke-hole which is used here and there in Parun and Waigal too.

(The sections and plans in Pl.2,3, and 4 are all copied with minor alterations from original drawings made according to Edelberg's directives by Babamorad Feraghi, Kabul Museum.)

Pl.5: Triple-house in Keshtagrom with a modern addition often used as guest-house to the left. This type of room has been invented between 1953 and 1964. (Photo: Edelberg 1964).

Pl.6: House in Zhönchigal in Waigal. (Photo: Edelberg 1964).

Pl.7: The interior of the roofed verandah from kantar kōt in Berimdes/Waigal village. It is a double house, therefore the roof is supported by a row of pillars. Note the capitals. (Photo: Edelberg 1964).

Pl.8: The āmā of the kantar kōt in Berimdes. The light comes from the same side as the entrance (outside the picture to the right). (Photo: Edelberg 1970).

Plates 9 - 12 to L.Edelberg: The Traditional Architecture of Nuristan and Its Preservation (Clan Houses and Temples). (Photos: Edelberg 1964 and 1970).

Pl.9: The entrance of Mara's clan house (Kusum clan house) in Shtiwe.

Pl.10: The village tower of Shtiwe. It is connected with the Mara's clan house. It is (in 1970) the last existing village tower in the Parun valley.

Pl.11: The kantar kōt in Berimdes/Waigal village. The restored part of the double house is seen in the background to the right.

Pl.12: The kantar kōt in Waramdes/Waigal village.

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# INDEX

(M = map, Pl. = plate)

- Aarhus, Århus XI, 41, 119  
 Abdurrahman, Abdur Rahman 4, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 24  
 Adoption 51, 56  
 Affiliation 44, 46, 62  
 Affinality 51, 56  
 Afghan(istan) IX-XII, 3, 12-14, 16, 23-26, 41, 44, 51, 61, 62, 69, 116, 118, 119, 128  
 Afridi 4  
 Afzal-ul-Mulk 105  
 Agnate, agnatic 44, 46, 47, 51, 52, 59  
 Ahura Mazdah 40  
 Akbar Khan 100  
 Al'baum, L.I., 42  
 Alexander 69  
 Alingar 4, 6, 122, M  
 Alishang 4  
 Allchin, B. & R., 42  
 Āmā 120-123, 125, 126, 136, Pl. 3, Pl. 8  
 Amulet s. charms  
 Ancestor 21, 71, 72, 77, 84, 113  
 Anjuman pass IX, M.  
 Antimony 75, 109  
 Ara 64  
 Aramuch 65  
 Arandu 6, 70, M.  
 Arkari 70  
 Arrow 27, 29, 77, 78, 82, 83, 84  
 Aryan 42, 69, 124  
 Asakal, aqsaqal 70  
 Ashkun 6, 7, 8, 34, M.  
 Ateramgai, aterimgai 121, 122, 126  
 Atser s. Azei  
 Atrozan 46, 47  
 Avagana 41  
 Avesta(n) IX, 1, 6, 7, 8, 9  
 Ayun 79, 81, 85, 89, M  
 Azar (Shaikh Abdullah Khan) 11, 12, 14-17, 64, 65  
 Azei 27
- Badakhshan 1, 24, 43, 70  
 Badiluk 29  
 Bagisht-ta 65  
 Bagiz 26 (=Bagisht)  
 Bagorai 82  
 Bahadur 28  
 Bahman 70  
 Bahuk lake 89  
 Bailam 91  
 Balah 101  
 Balahisar 70  
 Balanguru 87  
 Balumain 71, 75, 78, 81, 85  
 Bamian 120
- Bangulai 80  
 Barandis 102  
 Bargam 23  
 Bargramatal, Bragamatal, Bagramatal, Burgamatol 4, 11, 13, 24, 64, M  
 Dari 46, 47, 52, 120, 121, 122, 123  
 Baro Mine s. Balumain  
 Barrenness 74  
 Bar Zangi 101  
 Bashaleni, batshaleni, seclusion or segregation house 66, 72, 76, 78, 83  
 Bashgal 4, 8, 11, 16, 27, 69-71, 77, 78, 80, 82, 120, 122, 123, M  
 Bashkarik s. also Kohistani 3  
 Batur 64  
 Baumann, H., 39  
 Belenickij, A.M., 41  
 Belnizar 89  
 Berimgai 122, 126  
 Betan = Dehar 77, 81, 104, 105  
 Bhils 40  
 Biddulph IX  
 Bilaterality 51, 55  
 Binórm 22  
 Binyó 22, 52  
 Biori 70  
 Birir 71, 77, 79, 80, 82, 83, 93, M  
 Birkot 91  
 Bisale 93  
 Bohten dayak 100  
 Bohtuik 105  
 Bolte, J., 35  
 Bomboret, Bumburet, Bumboret 4, 13, 14, 16, 24, 25, 69, 70, 71, 76, 78, 79, 80, 84, 85, M  
 Bon religion XI  
 Boorne, A., XIV, 96  
 Bow 83, 84  
 Bread, loaf 18, 19, 27, 64, 66, 67, 74, 83, 93, 97, 99, 102  
 Brhatsamhitā 41  
 Brumotul 11, M  
 Brun 79, 80  
 Bubur 43  
 Budalak 93  
 Buddhist XI, 4, 35, 71  
 Buddruss, G.X, 5, 31, 35, 39, 131, 133  
 Büni 22  
 Bulesing 70, 79  
 Bull, bullock 27, 35, 37, 68, 76, 79, 81, 105  
 Burdun 15  
 Burushaski 1  
 Butter, s. also ghee 44, 66, 74
- Carving 1, 46, 120-124, 136  
 Cat 27, 75, 82, 98, 107, 113  
 Cattle (cow, ox) 18, 44, 64, 71, 76, 84

Chaga Sarai 4,69,128,M  
 Chanlu, Čanlu 26  
 Charms 75,106  
 Chaumos, s.Chitrimas  
 Cheese 27,44,64,66,90,91,93  
 Chilimjusht, s.Joshi  
 Chitirmas, Chitrimas, Chaumos,  
 Winter Festival 73,76,78,81,82,  
 83,88  
 Chitral X,XIV,1,3,4,6,11,13,14,  
 16,24-26,43,49,51,69,70,79,83,  
 89,91,95,96,98,101,103-106,  
 117,118,M  
 Chumur Deki ('Iron Legs') 100  
 Clan 46,49  
 Clan house 124-126,136,Pl.9  
 Collective tombs 43  
 Cowry shells 65,77  
 Creation 26,31,32,36,71  
 Cup s.silver cup  
 Cuyler Young Jr.,T.,42  
  
 Damana 66  
 Dameli 6,7,8,M  
 Dance,dancing-ground 17,18,20,  
 72,76,77,79,88-90,92,93,94  
 Dardic IX,X,2,3,4,6,8,39,40,  
 43,44  
 Darel 42  
 Darra-i Nur 4  
 Dastur 72,77  
 Deblol 17,19  
 Deceased, dead bodies 20,43,103,  
 104,112,113,115  
 Dehar (shaman) 73,74,78,79,91  
 Demik 106  
 Demon 'devil',evil spirit,jinn,  
 cf.also giant 26,28,29,30,34,  
 36,37,95,100,101,102  
 Denmark XIII,117,128  
 Deodar 18,119  
 Deši šara (village law) 45  
 'Devil' s.demon  
 Dew (deity,demon) 81,82,cf.Dow  
 Dewa 121,M  
 Dezau,Tezaw, also Khodai 71,81  
 Dhen 93  
 Dionysos 42  
 Dir 3  
 Disani,disni,disain 19,66,124  
 Dispute settlement 45,49,50,54  
 Dizano 29  
 D'jakonov,M.M., 41,42  
 Dog 27,78,80,82,84,86,98,103,107,  
 114  
 Dow 81,99,100 cf.Dew  
 Dramui 89,90  
 Drosh 15,70,91,116,117,M  
 Duchesne-Guillemain,J., 40  
 Dümü Sunmri Merek 57  
 Dungul 22  
  
 Dupree, A.& L., 125  
 Duvey 45  
  
 Earthquake 28,73,82,124  
 Eclipse 41,72  
 Edelberg, L., X-XIV,27,32,33,36,  
 40,41,120,124,125,131,132,133,135,  
 136  
 Eken-tay-dül 47  
 Elphinstone 41  
 Esperegrā 34  
 Eye,evil 74  
  
 Faction(alism) 44,49  
 Fairy, pari 71,74,79,84,95-100,  
 101-107,109,110,114  
 Family 49,50,88  
 Feast-giving, f.of merit, 46,47,  
 48-50,58,59,64-66,68,70,72  
 Feraghi,B., 136  
 Ferdinand, K., XI,131,133  
 Festival 11,17-21,76,87-94,99  
 Fire 28,34,75,105,108,115,120  
 Flower cap s.suhalek  
 Fondukistan 41  
 Friedrich, A., 43  
 Fussman,G., 131  
  
 Gajépso 57  
 Gambiri, Gemiri 5  
 Gandhara 42  
 Gawar-Bati 3,8,M  
 Ghālīgai 42  
 Ghee 18,20,24,64,97,105 (s.also  
 butter)  
 Ghoru 110  
 Ghulam Muhammad 41  
 Ghulam Murtaza 69,70  
 Giant 31-34,40,78,80,81, cf.demon  
 Giche 17,18,65,66  
 Gilgit 1,3,29,41,43,86,100,102,  
 103,105  
 Gish 16,17,26-28  
 Gish namuch 17,34  
 Giz s.Gish  
 Goat 18,28,44,46,48,64,65,66,68,  
 72,74,80-82,84-86,88,90-94,102,  
 104,109,117,125  
 Gobor 24,70  
 Gods 17,18,19,20,24,26,31,34,71,  
 72,82,91,124  
 Goetz, H., 41  
 Gor (witch) 100  
 Goshidai, Goshedoi 76,91  
 Grangal 3,M  
 Greek 8,69,96  
 Grierson, G., 2,69,70  
 Grimor 82  
 Gujaras 41

- Gujuri 3,M  
 Gul, -gal, -gəl, gol ('valley',  
 resp!world') 5,31,97  
 Gulbahar 4  
 Gulkhan 108  
 Gulmó:tkon 57  
 Gupta 41  
 Gūr 62
- Halmasti 98  
 Hamp 8  
 Hansen, E., 127,131,132  
 Harva, U., 35  
 Harvest 45,93  
 Hashmatullah Khan 43  
 Head-dress, kopesi 72,75,77  
 Hearth s.gulkhan  
 Heine-Geldern, R.v., 42  
 'Hell', duzath 83  
 Hephtalites, White Huns 40,41,42  
 Hindu 4,17,18,20,71  
 Hindukush Cultural Conference  
 XI,64,96,117,131-135  
 Holly-oak 44,89,93  
 Homicide 47,64,65-66  
 Hoq 101  
 Horse 18,32,33,35,37,44,71,73,75,  
 78,79,81,102,114  
 two-headed h. 40  
 Hunt, shikar 37,78,90,97,109,110  
 Hunter, shikari 89,97,109,110  
 Hunza 1  
 Hussam-ul-Mulk XIV,26,81,95,108,  
 116,117
- Ibex 97,110  
 Im 'medicine' 26  
 Imra, Imrā, Mara 16,26,28,29,30,  
 31,33,34,36,37,40  
 India IX,1,15,16,33,39,41-43,69,  
 116  
 Indo-Aryan, Indian 2,3,6,7-9,34  
 Indo-European 1,2,6-8  
 Indo-Iranian IX,1,8,9,17,40,44  
 Indr 34  
 Indra 33,34  
 Indus 3  
 Ingao,Ingaw 71,73,81  
 Inheritance 54  
 Iran,Iranian, Iranians 1,2,6-9,  
 39-43  
 Iron, steel, 26,27,29,30,74,75,  
 77,100,111,113,114  
 Irrigation 45,61,116  
 Ishkoman 43  
 Ishperi 74,76  
 Ishtareik 97  
 Ishtri-chal-nat 17,18  
 Islam, Islamic, Moslim X,XI,1,4,  
 13,14,16,17,24-26,32,39,41-43,  
 57,58,62,70,71,76,77,81,82,89,
- 91,95,107,116  
 Ismaili(6ic) 43,102  
 Istogosh dew 82  
 Izum 75
- Jadid-ul Islam, Jandih-i Islam 14  
 Jalalabad 4,13  
 Jalandhar 11,15  
 Jandaran 11  
 Jashtan 98,99  
 Jatrēvor (kinship) 51,55,56  
 Jāzi 22,52  
 Jensen,A.E., 39  
 Jēst, "Jast", Jisht 53,58,59,61,  
 62,67,68  
 Jestakhan 89,90  
 Jettmar, K., 29,39,42,43,131,133  
 Jinn s.demon  
 Jones, S., 11,44,50,51,59,62,87,  
 126,131,132  
 Joshi festival, Chilimjusht, Spring  
 festival 70,76,80,87-92  
 Jótr, kinsmen 51, Pl.1  
 Juniper 18,19,28,104
- Kabul IX,13,16,41,124-126  
 Kabul river 4  
 Kachru, B.B., 3  
 Kafir(s) IX,X,3,11,16,17,25,31,32,  
 33,34,36,37,39,40,43,68,69,81,82,  
 124,126  
 Red K. s.Kati 26,82  
 Black K. s.Kalash 83,105  
 Kafiri 1,2,4,5,6-10  
 Kafiristan X,11-13,22,34,37,39,  
 44,64  
 Kakar, M.H., 24,131,132  
 Kalash (of Chitral) X,XIV,3,4,24,  
 24,40,49,69-80,81-83,84-87,93,  
 118,119  
 Kalasha (language, of Chitral) 3,8  
 Kalasha, Kalasa (people of Waigal)  
 5,49,58,62  
 Kalashgum 77, 78 (of Chitral)  
 Kalashum (villages of the Waigal  
 valley), Kalasūm 5,22,44-50  
 Kalashum = Waigāli  
 Kam, Kom 8,22,24,25,51,52,55,57-63,  
 67,68,136  
 Kamdesh, Kómbrom 4,22,24,51,52,60,  
 64,123,M  
 Kamədol 22  
 Kamgəl, Kamgel 22  
 Kamú 22  
 Kamviri, Komviri 4,5,51,53,57,122  
 Kandisar 78  
 Kané, kanéyaš "Kaneash" 58,68  
 Kanishka 40  
 Kantar āmā  
 Kantar kōt 122,123,125,126,136  
 Kantiwo, Ktiwi 4,5,27,M



Kāpisha 4  
 Kashmir 15  
 Kashmiri 3  
 Katarkalai 4,5, M  
 Kati, "Katte" XIV,4-8,11,15-17,  
 34,51,122, M  
 Katur 24,26,64,98,103  
 Ketu 41  
 Khairullah 24  
 Khangī 98  
 Khaphesi 99  
 Kho 3,69,70,77,85,119  
 Khodai s.Dezau  
 Khowar XIV,3,8,116, M  
 Khushwaqt 24  
 Khyber 4  
 Kodakan 105,111  
 Kohistani 3,4  
 Kom s.Kam  
 Kombrom s.Kamdesch  
 Kopesi (head-dress) 75,77  
 Koppers,W., 41  
 Kotshomai 81  
 Kristiansen,K., 11,131,133  
 Krö,verandah 123,125,126  
 Kšto, Küst 22  
 Kštorm 22  
 Kštöki, Kushteki 33, M  
 Ktiwi, Ktívi s.Kantiwo  
 Külür(w)a 34  
 Kulam, Kulum 4,8,122, M  
 Kun, Koṭya 22,23  
 Kunar 1,3,4,22,23,51, M  
 Kunarhā Province 51  
 Kurdari 4  
 Kushana 40

Laghman 4  
 Lahore 16  
 Lake 97,98,114  
 Lampāka 4  
 Lamtson 87,91  
 Lanḍay Sin 22,51  
 Latin 2,8  
 Lazoro (devil) 28  
 Leitner,G.W., 29  
 Lentz,W., 36,37,131,133  
 Levy,M., 131,132  
 Leymach,leymoch,lé:moč 26,57,  
 64,67  
 Lineage 44,45-47,49,51-55,59,  
 62,88  
 Litvinskij,B.A., 43  
 Lohuizen-de Leeuw,J.E.v., 39  
 Lotdeh 24  
 Lotkuh 24,70,74, M  
 Lüders,H., 34  
 Lunang 35

Mahandev, Mahandeo, Maha Dew 71,76,  
 79,81,88,89,90,92,94  
 Maize 44,94  
 Majga 66  
 Maj-sa-maj-gum-ashali 66  
 Malada 64  
 Malaja Pereščepina 42  
 Malavey 45  
 Malosh, malotsh, malush, malutsh  
 28,73,76,81,82,83  
 Mandi, Māndi s.Mon  
 Mara, Māra s.Imra  
 Markhor, wild goat 80,85,86,89,97,  
 98,110,125  
 Maru, "Márá Kán" 11  
 Masson,V.M., 39  
 Mastuj 24, M  
 Megalithic 39  
 Mehtar 11,24,25,43,71,87,116  
 Mer s.mir  
 Mergi 105  
 "Mezhom" s.müzō:  
 Mi, mü 58,66,68  
 Müzō: ('mü-dinner') 58  
 Middle Asia 43  
 Milk 29,35,71,74,76,89-91,93,102,  
 114  
 Mill 29,35,93  
 Millet 44,94,109  
 Mimach, mümoc 58,66  
 Mir, mer 57,59,67,68  
 Mirkhani 6  
 Mirza Kachat 102  
 Mithras 37,38  
 Moesgård XI,XII,XIV,43,117,131-133,  
 135,136  
 Mohammad Beg Timuri 24  
 Mon, Moni, Mandi, Māndi, Mani 18,  
 19,26,28,29-34,40  
 Monguor 35  
 Moon 72, s.also 'sun and moon'  
 Morgenstierne,G., X,XI,1,6,14,15,  
 17,26,34,41,51,70,81,87,131,132,  
 135  
 Motamedi,A.A., 124,125,131,132,133  
 Mulkho 102,103  
 Mumó, Mum 22  
 Munji 9, M  
 Munvon, Marvon 17,20  
 Murgathipi 99  
 Music 17,20  
 Muskotuk 29  
 Muslim s.Islam

Nagar 23,98  
 Nagarāhāra 4  
 Nagir 1  
 Nang 101  
 Ničingəl 22,51  
 Nijrau 4  
 Nilon 17,18, Nilu 68  
 Ningalam 3

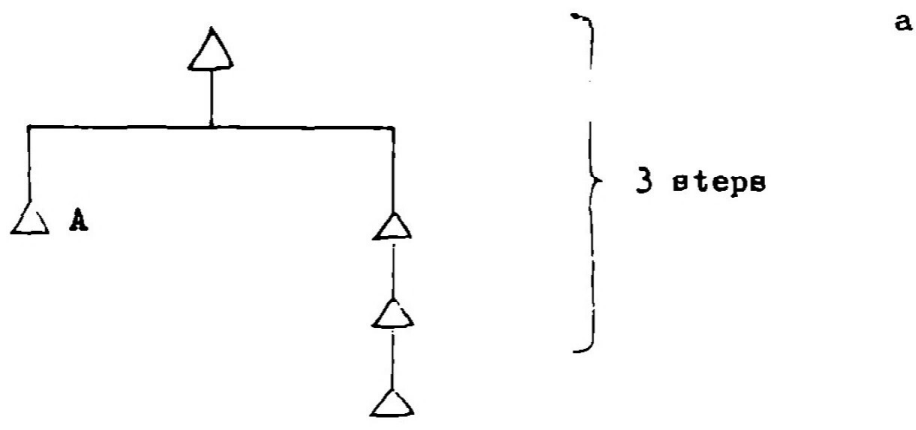
Nišeygra:m 62  
 Nizam-ul-Mulk 24,105  
 Norwegian 17  
 Nuristan X,XI,XIII,1,4,8,10,11,14,  
 15,22,24,37,44,50,57,118,119,  
 120,121,122,124,126,128,129,  
 130,136, M  
 Nuristani,M.A., 58,62  
 Nuristani,Y., 118,131,133  
 Nur Mohammad 32  
  
 Ojor valley 70  
 On-jesta-much 88  
 Oshniru ('pure') 73,76,89,104  
 Ossetia 42  
 Otrok 85  
 Outhiz (Utr?) 26  
  
 Pabúštō 22,60  
 Pahlawa 41  
 Pakistan XI,XII,3,4,40,51,71,  
 118,119  
 Palwal,A.R., 64,85,93,124,131,  
 132,133  
 Pamirs 1,43  
 Panjshir 4, M  
 Papruk 122  
 'Paradise', behesht 83  
 Paramuch 65  
 Pari s.fairy  
 Pari khan 105,106,107  
 Parun s.Prasun  
 Pasha(v)i 3,4, M  
 Pašto 1,4,5, M  
 Paški, Pashki 34,121,136, M  
 Pastures 45,46,48,52,54,66,85,  
 93,119  
 Patrification 51,54  
 Patrilineality 51  
 Pech s.Prasun  
 Peshawar Museum 40  
 Phalura 3, M  
 Pherutis 99  
 Pillar, carved p., 120,121,122,  
 123-125, 136, Pl.7, Pl.8  
 Pir 102  
 Pjandžikent 42  
 Polivka,G., 35  
 Pott,J., XIV,96,116,131,132,133  
 Praba 71,80,93  
 Prabaro 82  
 Prasun, Parun, Pech 1,3(Wasī) 5,  
 6-8, 22,27,31-36,120-125,  
 136, M  
 Pronz, Pronj, Purunz, Sēc 32-34  
 121, M  
 Prun festival 93  
 Pshu (shaman) 19,20  
 Puja 17,18,19  
 Pul festival 76  
  
 Punyal 43,100  
 Pythasoon (in Urtsun) 27  
  
 Qalamdar, jinn,101, 102  
 Qazi Ghulam Ullah (Mólkon) 45,57  
 Qila 70  
  
 Rai, Rais 70,79,91  
 Raid 48,77  
 Raja Wai 24,70,77,78,79  
 Rajputs 41  
 Ram s.also sheep 125  
 Ramgal, Ramgæl 4,8,122, M  
 Rank 46,47,48,57,58,59,64-68  
 Rau,W., 66  
 Redard,G., 131  
 Reshun 3,70  
 Rigveda 1,9,33  
 Robertson,G.S., X,11,12,16,17,31  
 34,36,40,50,55,57-59,62,64,67,  
 68,81,122-124  
 Rock pictures, -inscriptions XI,  
 85,86  
 Romodin,V.A., 39  
 Rosenfield,J.M., 40  
 Rovsing Olsen,P., 131,132  
 Rumbur 4,70,71,76,77,78,M  
 Russell,R., 15  
  
 Safar nisik 108  
 Safidposh 14  
 Sajigor, Sajjigor 71,77,78,89  
 Saka, Sacian 40,43  
 Salmanaš 50  
 Sangli dynasty 43  
 Sanowkun 68  
 Sanskrit 2,3,6-9,81  
 Sardar Kashmir 11-14  
 Sardar Kun (=Kun) 11,12  
 Sardar Maru, "Kán Mára" 11,12,13  
 14,  
 Saskü 22, M  
 Saymaly Tash (Ferghana) 86  
 Sazí 'team' 60-63  
 Schomberg,R.C.F., 81  
 Schröder,D., 35  
 Šēru s.Wama  
 Šewala 46,47  
 Shaikh Abdullah Khan s.Azar  
 Shaker,N.A., 131  
 Shakur 40  
 Shala Shah 91  
 Shandur pass 103  
 Sheep, ram, 18,44,71,74,81,82,  
 125  
 Shemul 4  
 Shen Tsung-wen 120  
 Shepherd 18,20,82,85,93,97  
 Shero thun 108  
 Shigan 82

Shina 3  
 Shikar, shikari s.hunt, hunter  
 Shingmou 89,90  
 Sniri Badat 86  
 Shishiku(h) 70,89,103,  
 Shogor 70, M  
 Shtitsurinam 66  
 Shtiwe 121,124,125, M  
 Shumasht 3  
 Shuramach 65  
 Siam s.Tsiam  
 Siiger,H., XI,40,56,87,131,133  
 Silver cup 41,42,64  
 Singoor 102  
 Siyaposh 14  
 Small Pox 74  
 Snake 75,98  
 Snoy, P., 32,36,39,40,84,131,133  
 Soghdian 41  
 Solstice 36  
 Sooth-drawing 84  
 Sorizan, s.Surisan  
 Spirits,s.also demons, 74,81,84  
     104,108  
 Spring festival s.Joshi  
 Stacul,G., 42  
 Staley,J., 108,117  
 Stietencron,H.v., 41  
 Strand,R.F., 5,22,51,57,131,  
     132,136  
 Such ('pure') 19,28  
 Suchi 89,91,92  
 Suhalek, flower cap, 93  
 Sulani 64  
 Sumal Beg 84  
 Su-Malik 70  
 Sun (and moon) 29-34,36,37,  
     40,41  
 Sunajina 67  
 Sunashista 65,67  
 Sunvnay-ara 65  
 Surisan, Sorizan 76,91  
 Surya 41  
 Swat 3,42  
 Swir 70  
 Syrach-Larsen,C., 131,133  
  
 Tadjik 43  
 Tagau 4  
 Tawney,C.H., 35  
 Tezaw, s.Dezau  
 Thraco-Phrygian 42  
 Thunder 73,115  
 Tibet XI  
 Tirahi 4  
 Tirich Mir 96,101,103  
 Tocharistan 42  
 Toporov,V.N., 35  
 Torwali 3  
 Trance 19,20,73,74,104  
 Transcaucasian 42  
 Tsar 113  
  
 Tshawan (shawan), 'fairy shepherd'  
     97,109  
 Tshentjik,tshintik,shinjik 97,109  
  
 UNESCO XII,119,134,135  
 Urdu 3,11,14,15,17  
 Uré,"Urir" 62,63  
 Urtsun XIV,24,26,27,70,95, M  
 Ushtruk 113  
 Uta,Utah,utó ('ritual leader')  
     59,66,67,122,125  
 Utchal festival 76  
  
 Vama s.Wama  
 Varachša 42  
 Vay 22  
 Veda,Vedic,pre-Vedic IX,6,9,33-35  
 Verandah s.krö  
 Veran 82  
 Veron 28, s.Prasun  
 Vŗtra 33,34  
  
 Waigal,Vaygal, s.also Kalashum,  
     Kalaşüm 3,22,44,46,49,50,120,121,  
     122,123,125,126,136, M  
 Waigali 3,5,6,7,8,44 M  
 Wakhan IX,43  
 Walnut 26,27,80,93,99  
 Wama,Vama 6,22,34,64,122, M  
 Waramdesh/Prainta 126,136, M  
 Warin 71,82,83  
 Waterfall 32-37  
 Water-mill 29,93  
 Wazir Ali Shah 24,43,69,87,118,  
     131,132,133  
 Werchikwar 1  
 Wheat 27,44,66,73,94  
 Willow 18,19,20  
 Wine 41-43, 64,72,80,93  
 Wooden statues 40,72  
 Wor drek 97,114  
 Wotapur 4, M  
  
 Yali 64  
 Yama 41  
 Yamarāja 41  
 Yasin 1  
 Yuş, giant 31, Bar Zangi 101,102  
  
 Zamyāki, Lindalam 5, M  
 Zandar, also Berio zandar 102,103  
 Zaz 82  
 Zhönchigal 136,M  
 Zoroastrian 43  
 Zuzum 32,34

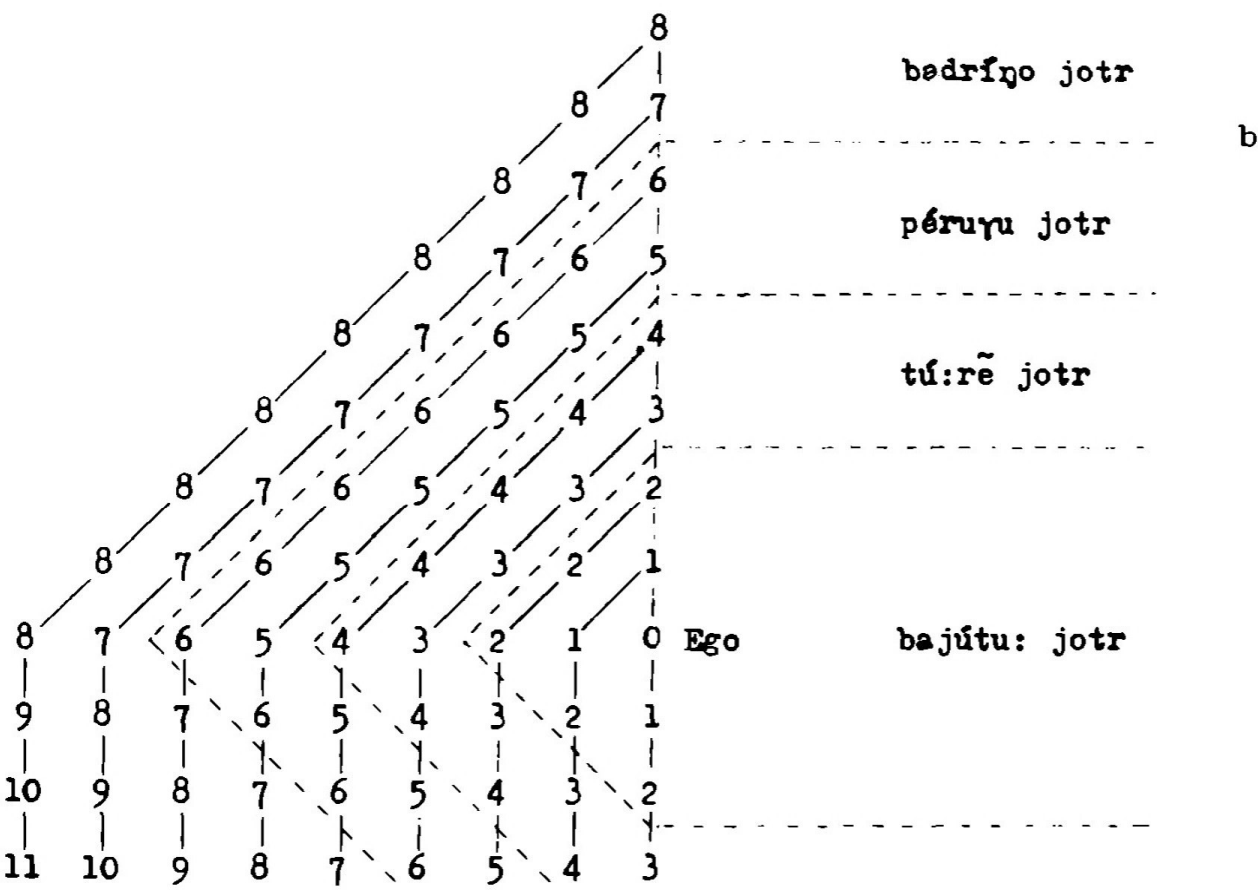
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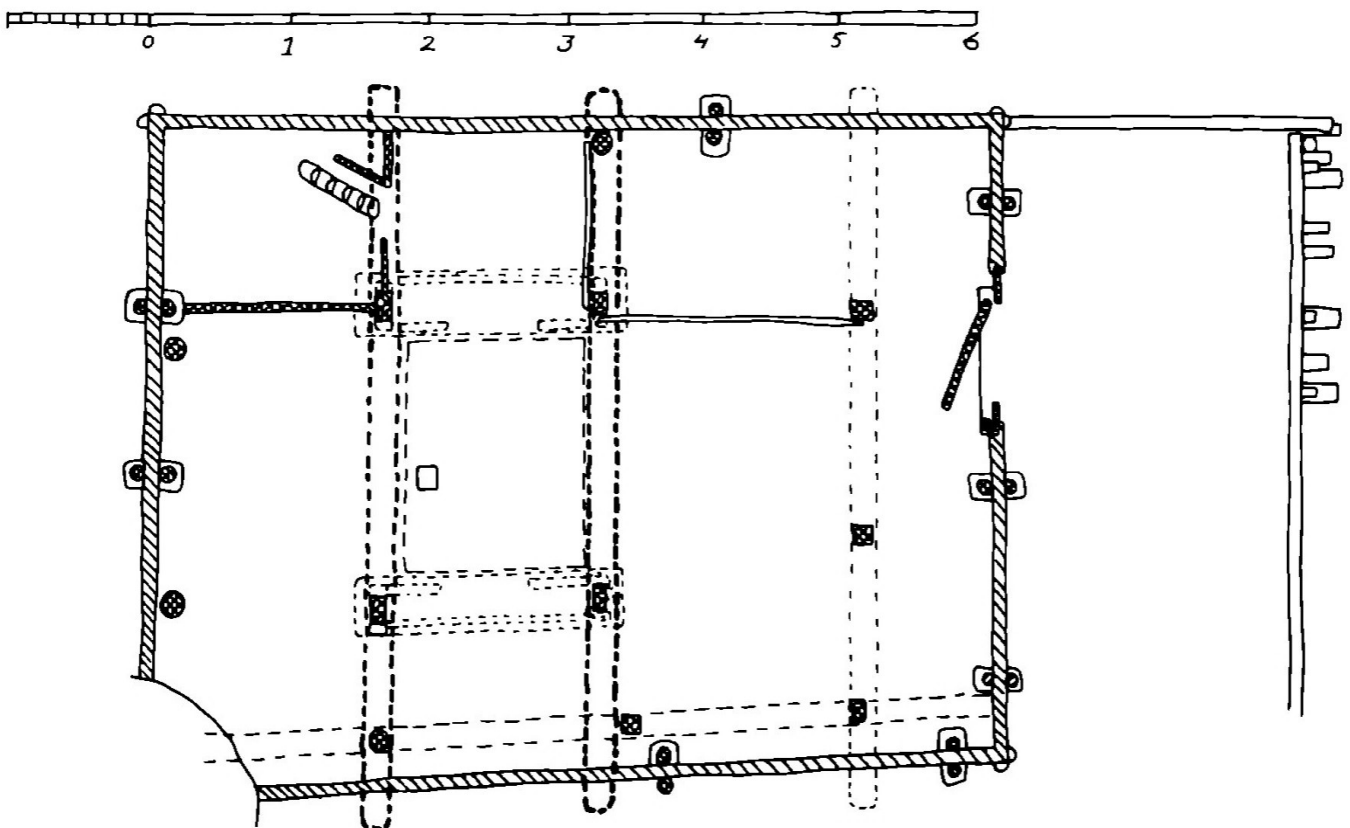
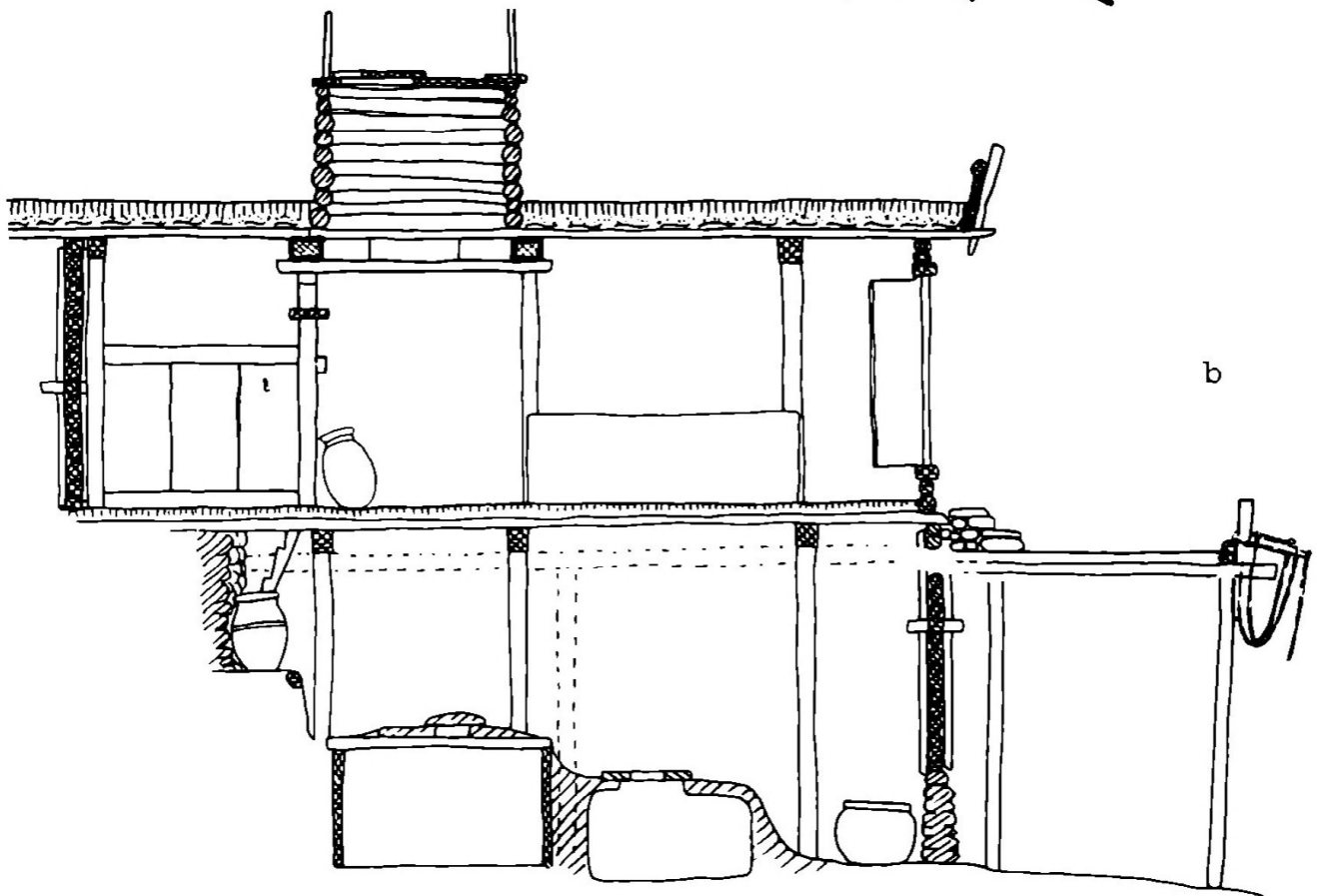
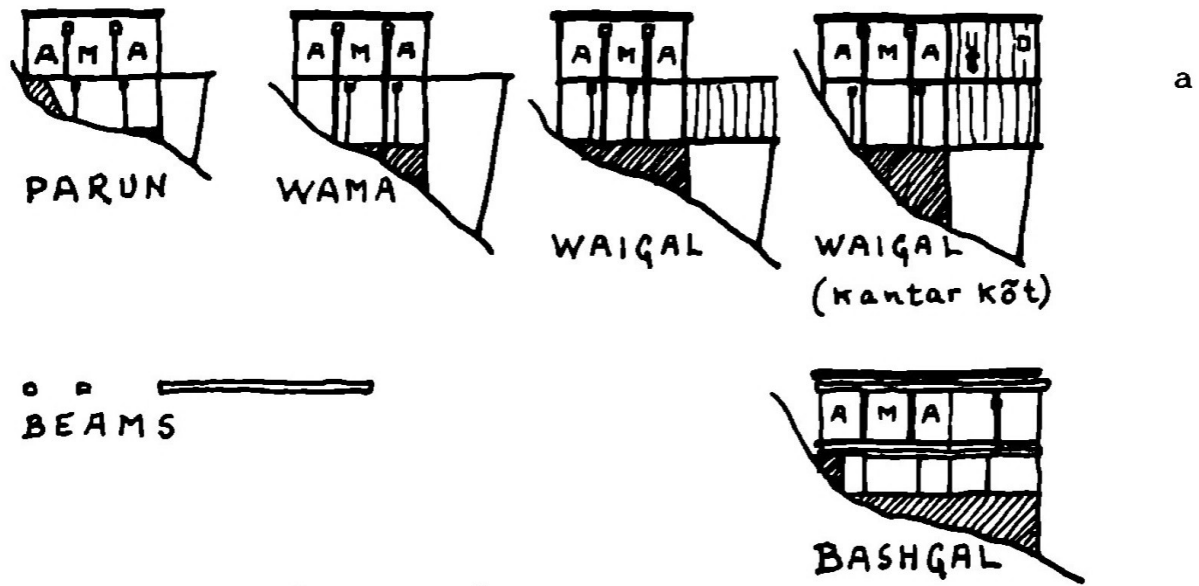


This diagram illustrates the number of steps between A and his brother's grandson.



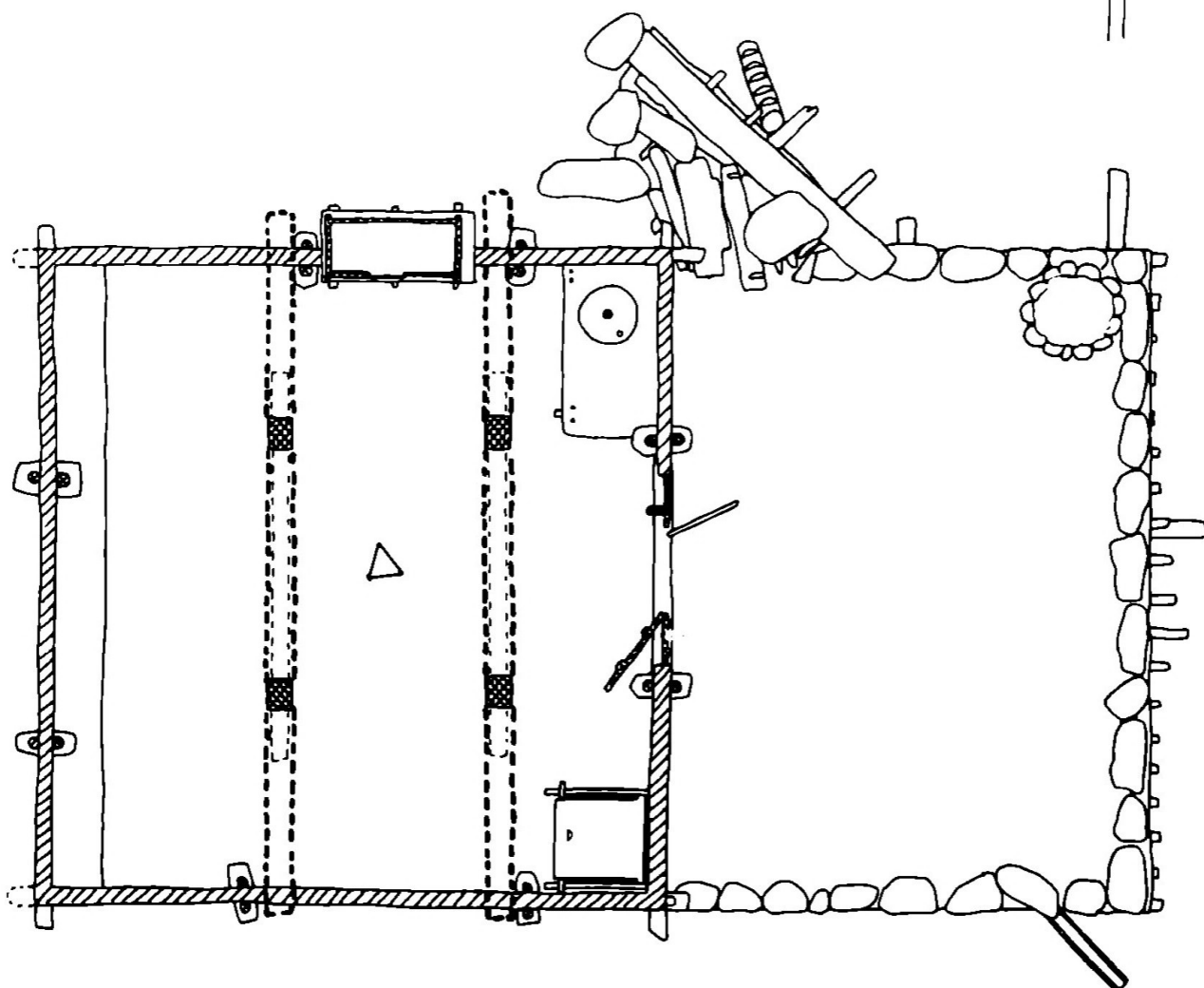
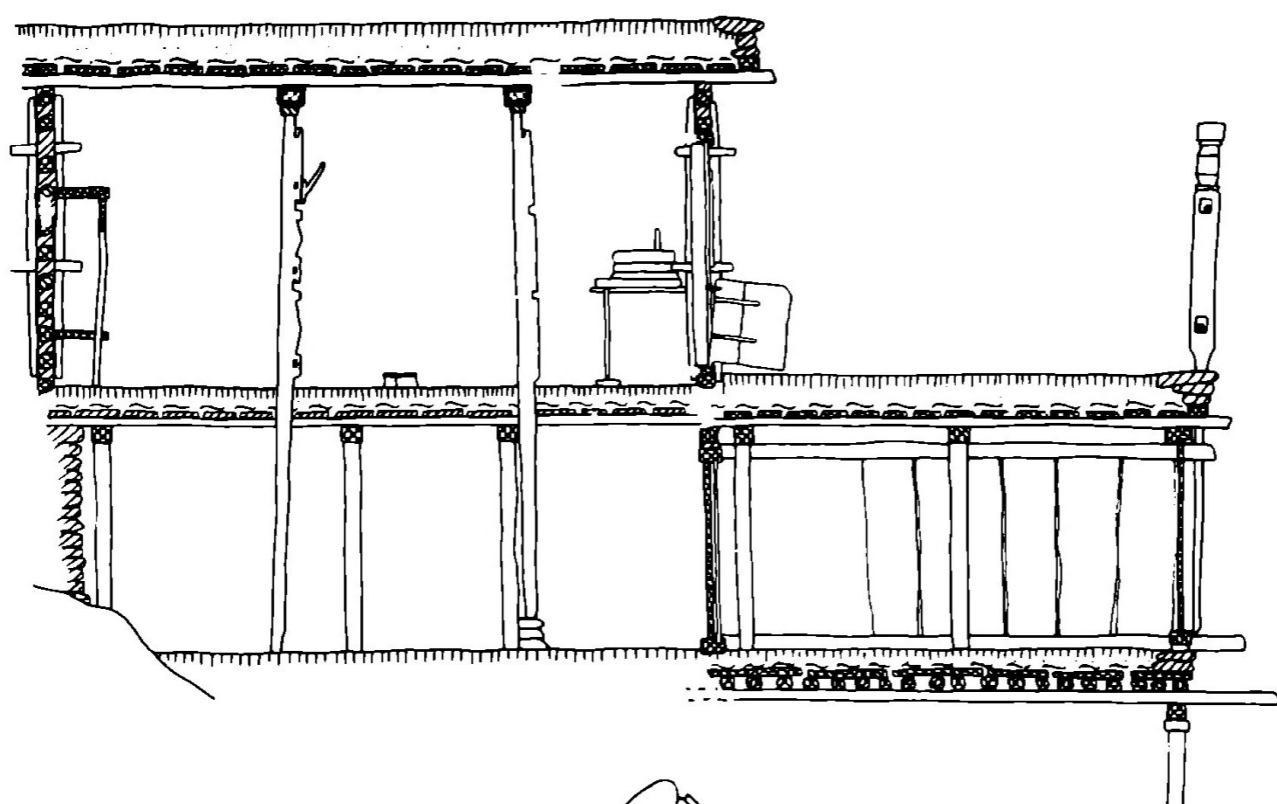
This diagram illustrates bilateral groups of kinsmen. Each node represents a kinsman, and the number at each node indicates the number of steps between the kinsman and Ego.



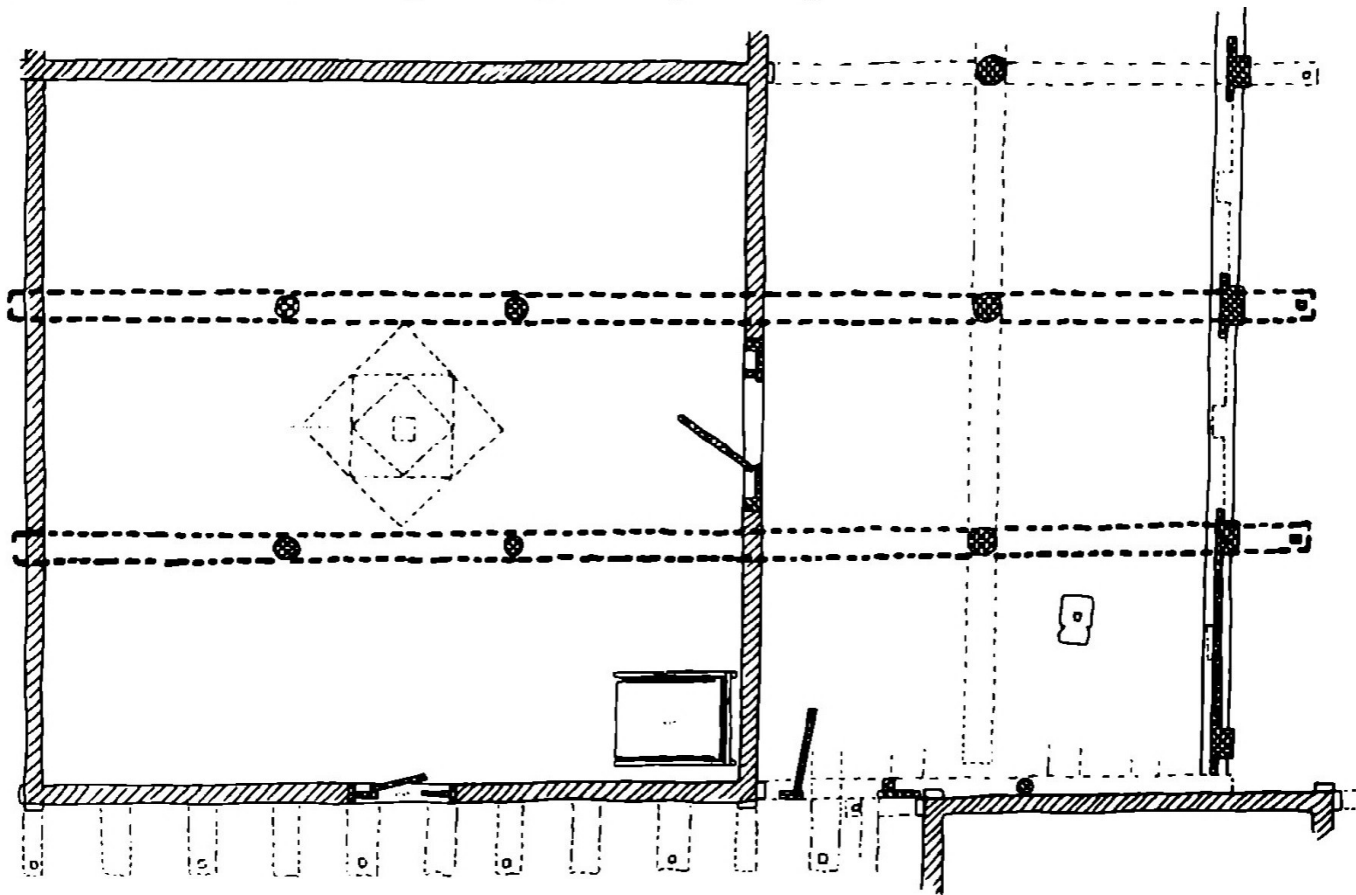
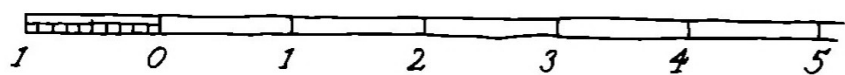
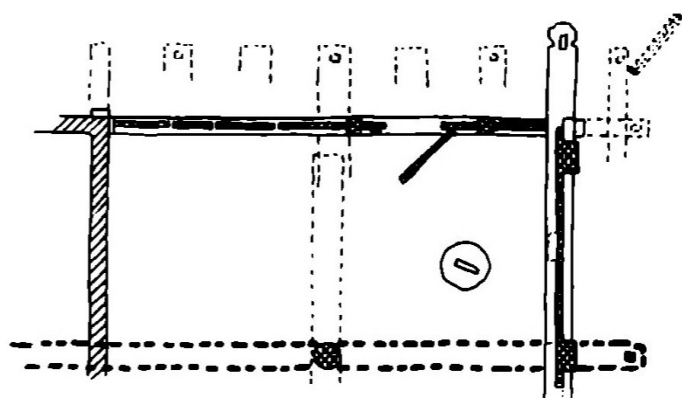
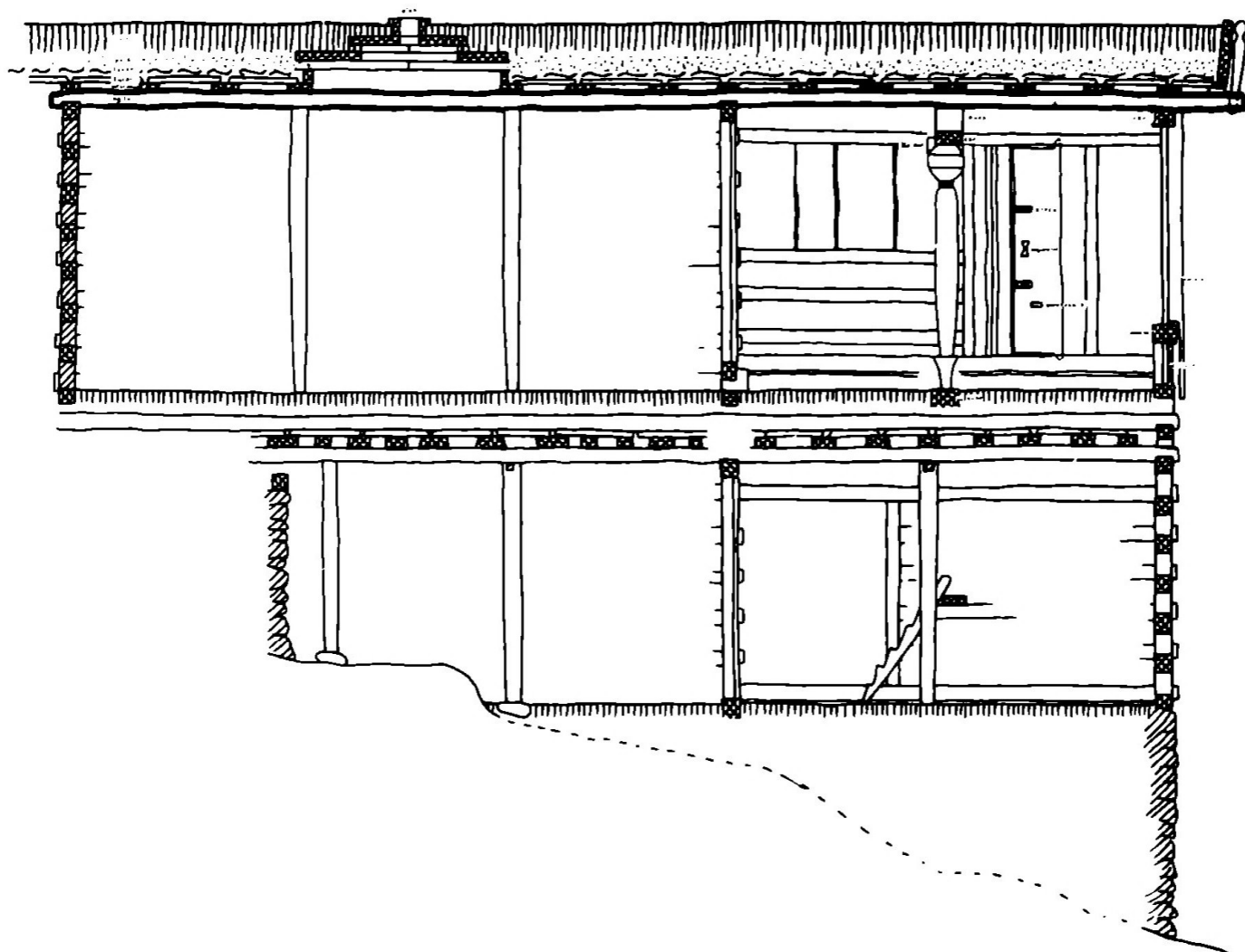






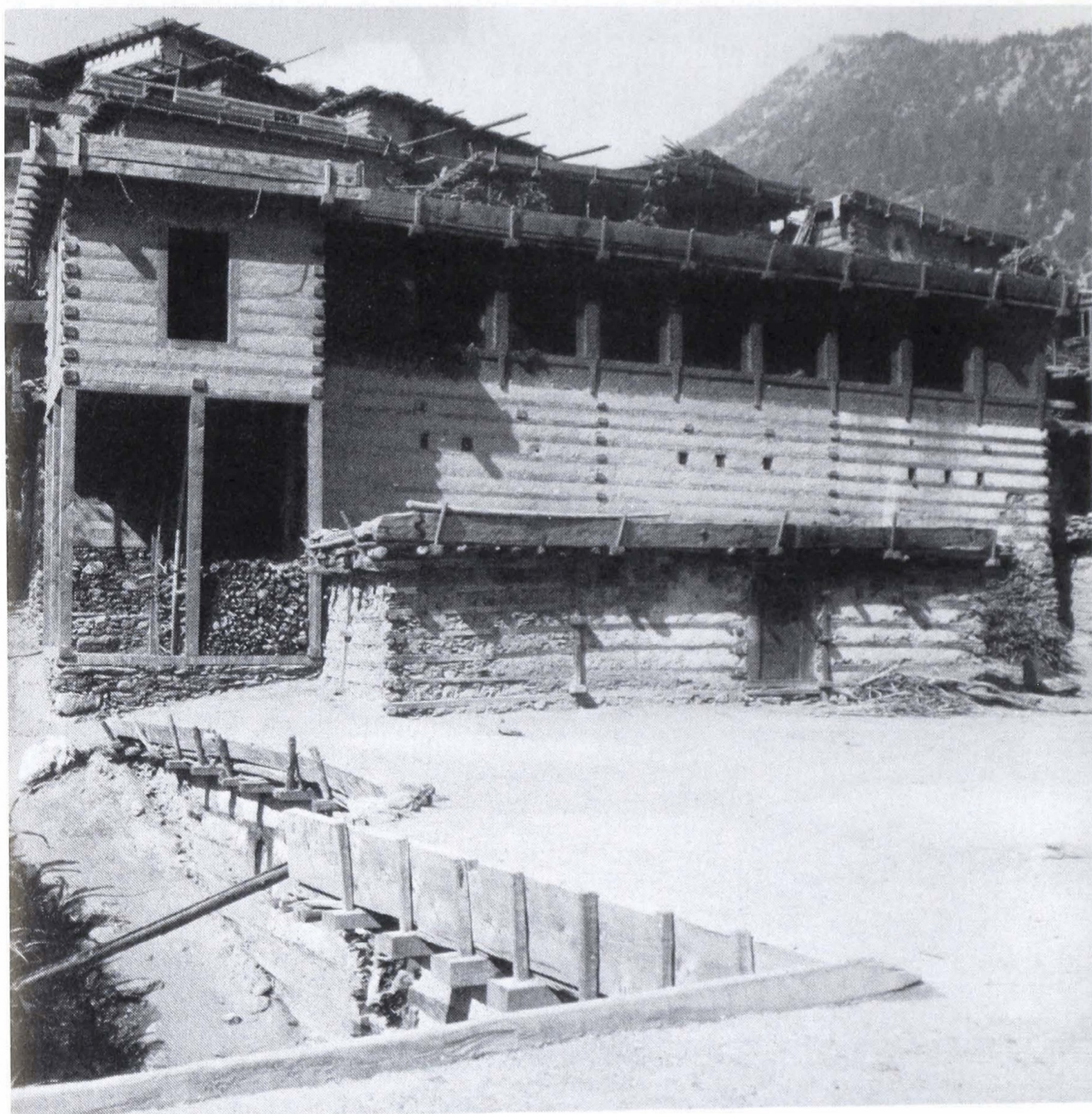






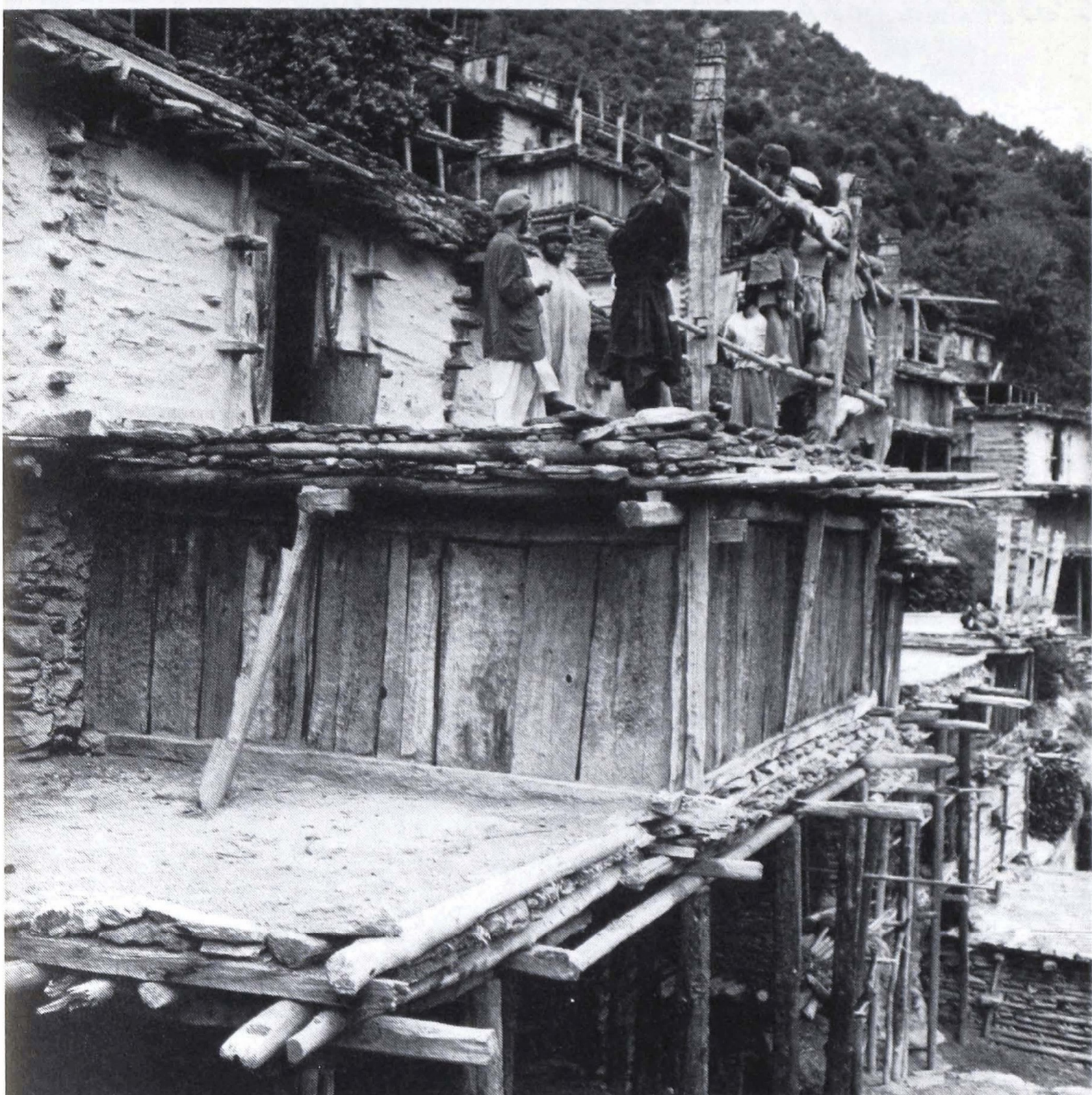












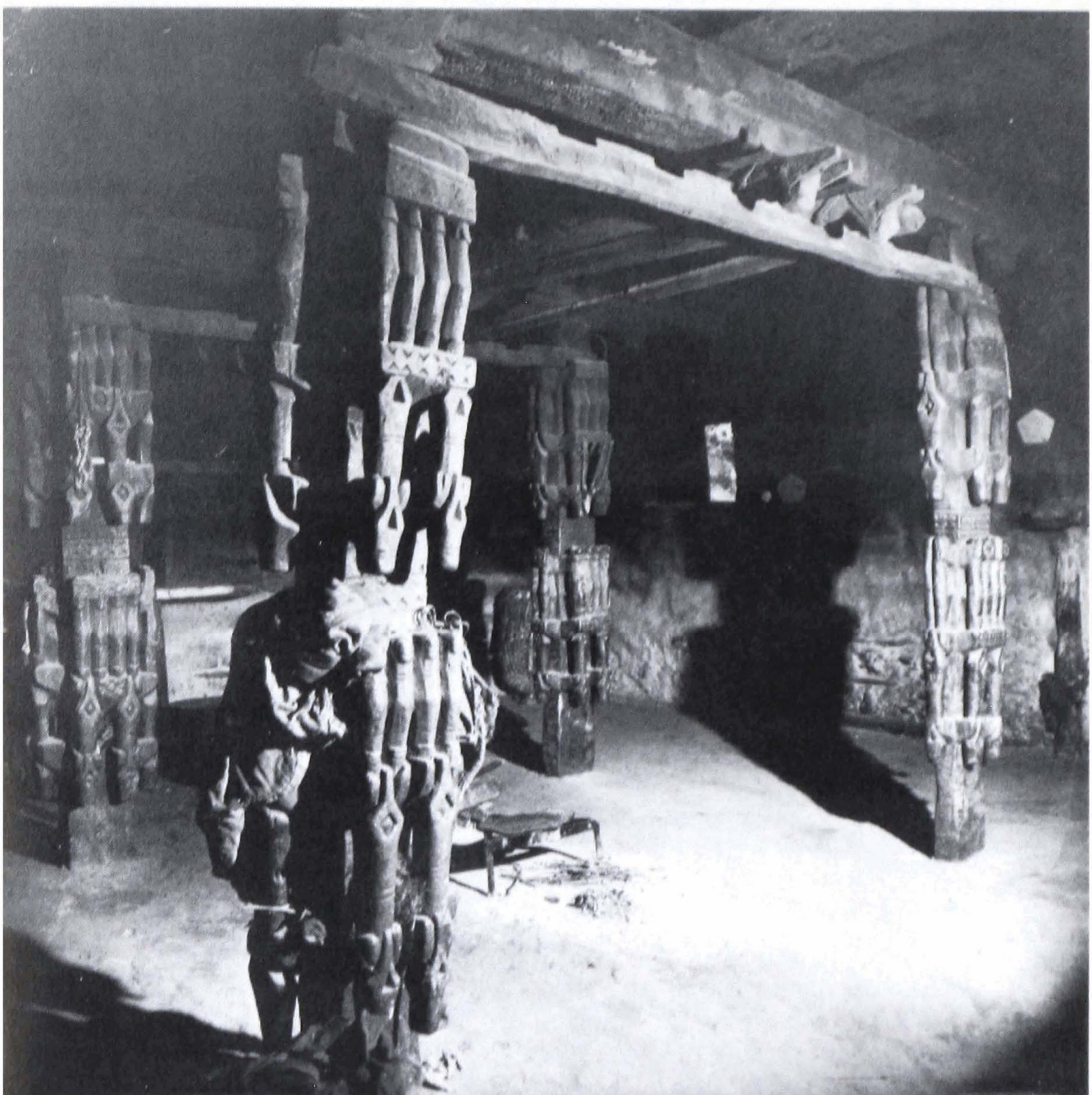






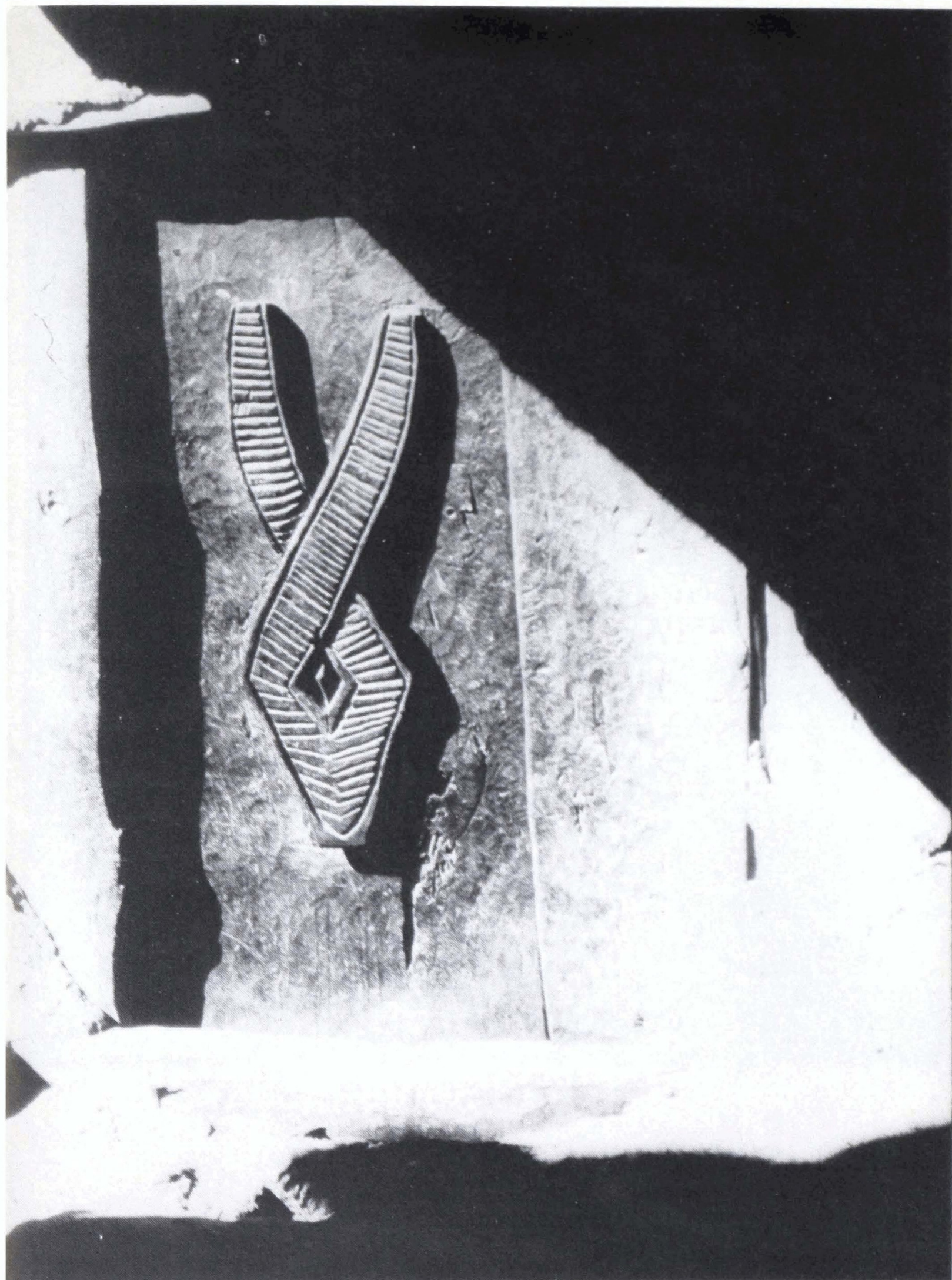






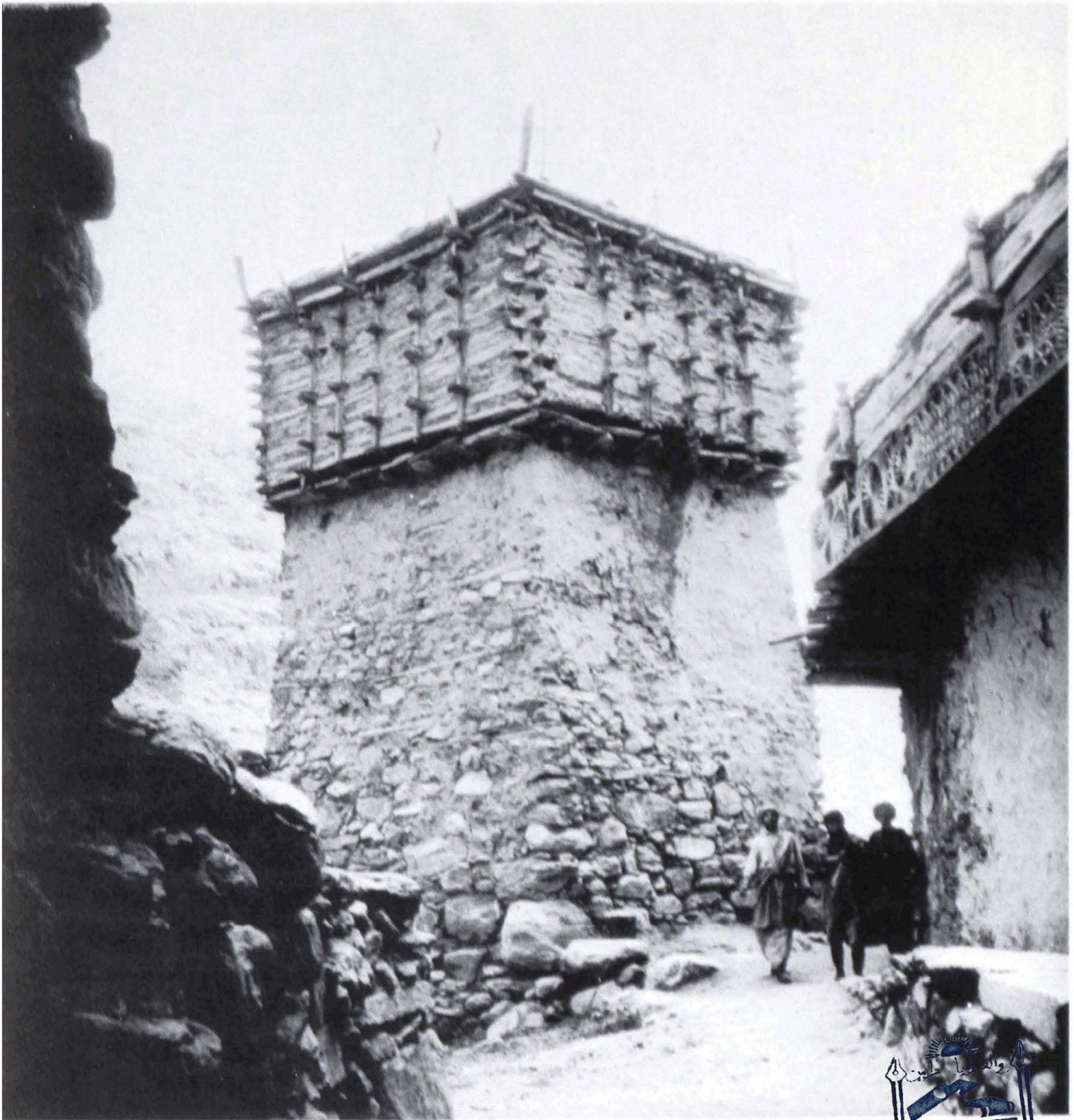
















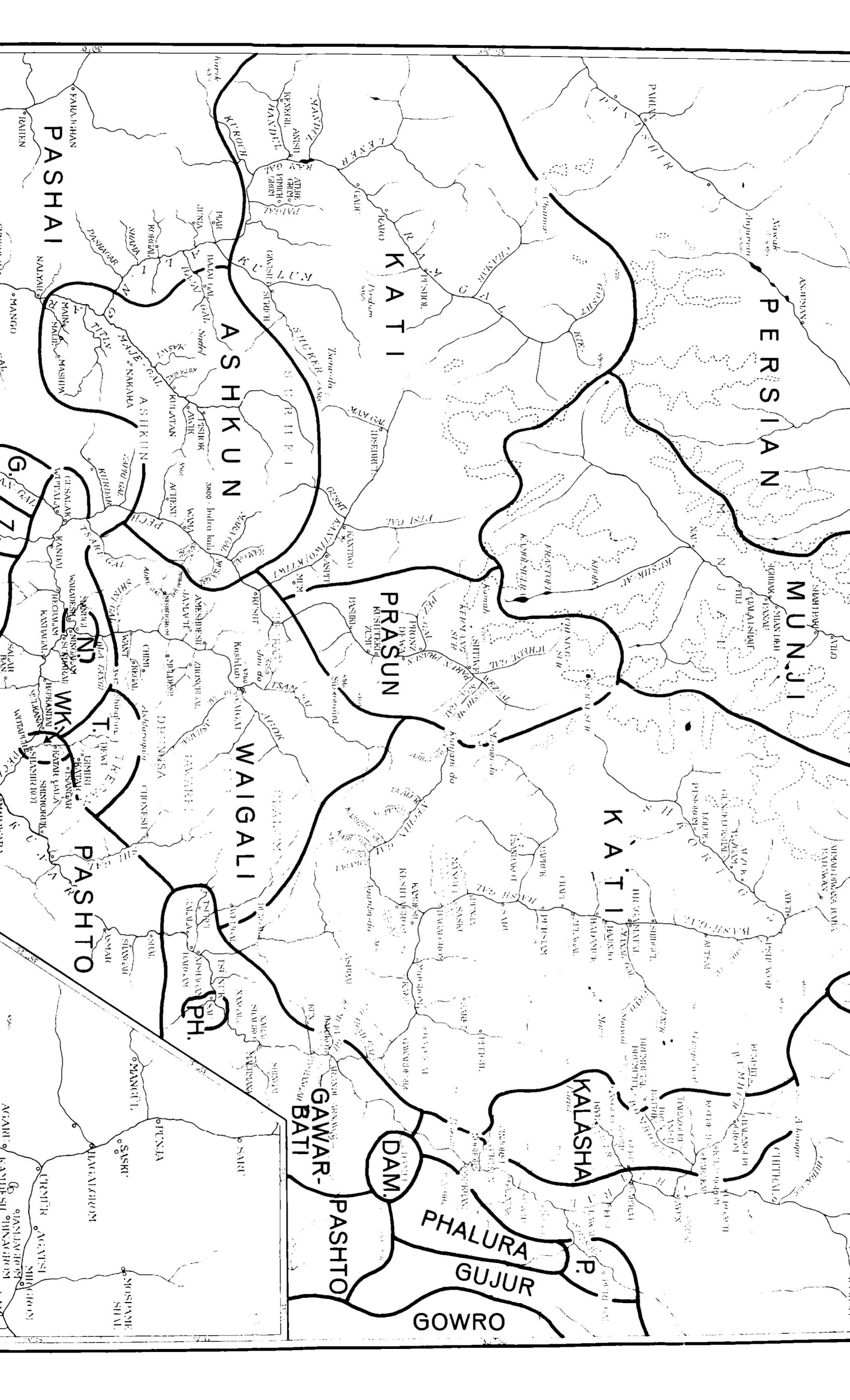












PERSIAN

MUNJI

KATI

PRASUN

KATI

KALASHA

PHALURA  
GUJUR

GOWRO

ASHKUN

WAIGALI

PASHTO

PASHAI

GAWAR-  
BATI

DAM.

PH.

WKS.

T.

WKS.

T.

WKS.

T.

WKS.

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T.

future of Nuristan and the adjacent areas. It was understood that nothing could be done effectively without the agreement and the active help of the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was equally accepted that in the future a great part of research work and documentation would pass over into the hands of people at the universities and museums of both countries directly concerned.

The final resolution was sent as a letter to the Secretary General of the UNESCO. The letter is included in this volume.

Shortly after the Conference L. Edelberg began with the preparation for presenting the scholarly results. Participants were asked to submit their papers as abstracts or their final versions and to put at editor's disposal photographs in order to form a substantively illustrated volume. It was considered whether or not to include the contents of the discussions during the sessions.

Most of the participants followed his advice and gave their consent to the procedure proposed.

After some time participants were informed that partly due to financial restrictions such a representative editing as originally planned would not be feasible. Instead each member could ask at his own cost for xerox copies of the papers available at Moesgård<sup>0</sup> for his personal use and should feel free to publish his contribution elsewhere.

The present editor understands this position perfectly well. The Conference had been so extremely rewarding because it gave a snapshot of the situation of research on one and the same complex in several countries of quite different standards. Thus some articles were of a rather general character, others were original contributions to particular problems. Some of them were raw material, but indispensable for farther research. Some remained still short summaries without footnotes, others had been enlarged to substantial articles with the full scientific apparatus.

Except for the trained linguists, most of the authors were highly individualistic in rendering proper names. All articles were in English, but also in the handling of this language individualistic attitudes could be observed. The discussions, too, were on an uneven level, sometimes, for a full understanding, a personal knowledge of the speaker would have been necessary; sometimes parts of the discussion made no more sense because the text of the paper had been changed for the purpose of publication.

Despite all these adverse circumstances, should it be permitted that the material gathered during the course of the Conference would not be put to the disposal of the whole community of scholars?

Even participants would be deprived of the possibility to refer to a published text, as the hope of having each individual article published independantly evidently was nil. Too many scholars who had the chance to work in Nuristan and the adjacent areas are still "breeding" their unpublished field notes. And what is perhaps even worse, there are many manuscripts only privately circulated among privileged friends. I too feel guilty in this respect. Finally our Scandinavian friends had succeeded in inducing at least some of us to put some of our results out on the table. Should we now be allowed to bury our hoarded informations again safely in the secrecy of our institutes?

This would have been all the more deplorable as the actual value of the Conference proceedings turned out to be even higher than could be realized at first sight. Once the papers would be arranged according to regions and their problems, the actual scholarly progress in the various lines of research would become quite readily intelligible.

In this situation I proposed to my Scandinavian colleagues to publish the papers in Germany, and this offer was accepted. As L.Edelberg's initiative had started the whole project, he should act as co-editor guaranteeing a certain degree of continuity.

However, the scope of this volume does not fully correspond to the concept our Scandinavian friends had in mind. Partly, this is due to the regrettable fact that here, too, financial resources are more and more restricted. I got the help of the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg which agreed to accept this book in one of its series, though this institute is committed to many other projects of publication. But we can make a virtue of necessity.

1. Of course, one cannot deny the fact that the content of this volume is not at all homogeneous. As I have mentioned we have in many cases preliminary reports showing us the momentary standard of progressing studies. Therefore a quick and inexpensive way of publication is adequate. This was made possible by using modern photomechanic techniques and preventing the inclusion of too many illustrations. As it appeared, however, that in the case of Edelberg's papers these would be difficult to understand without any illustrations, the rule here was broken and plates were added with the financial help from Danish institutions.

The fact should not be obscured that the authors have a quite different scientific background. Some of the best informed used therefore a rather naive system of transcription. I do not think it appropriate to "correct" them like an academic tutor. In cases

where identity with wellknown terms is evident, this is noted in the index. In almost all cases the English text is preserved for the same obvious reason.

3. During the Conference Mrs. Janet Pott gave a short summary of the highly valuable material collected by a Chitrali prince, Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk. Following the author mythological texts from the Katis settling in Urtsun were included in a chapter simply called "Kalash mythology". I went back to the original text prepared by the author for publication with the help of Miss Audrey Boorne, but dropped the parts outside the scope of this volume (Khowar Folk Stories and Proverbs). The rest was divided into three separate papers corresponding to the ethnic groups among whom the informations were collected. Mrs. Pott has written a short appendix giving the biographic data of this admirable man who has laid the foundations on which all further study of Chitrali folklore will rest.

4. No complete rendering of the papers delivered at Moesgård<sup>o</sup> was endeavoured beyond the number of contributions already gathered by L. Edelberg. Some articles which were difficult to understand without the slides or the tape-recordings we could hear in Moesgård<sup>o</sup> were suppressed. In the end, after some hesitation, I could not accept the publication of any parts of the discussion.

I cannot expect that all will be happy and content with this solution, but I hope that those of us who have still to publish their material will be stimulated to do so - by a glimpse on the preliminary reports of others disclosing so many unsettled problems.



## LANGUAGES OF NURISTAN AND SURROUNDING REGIONS

Georg Morgenstierne

The Hindu-Kush region - a tiny speck if you look at a map of Asia - presents, especially in its western parts with Nuristan as the centre, an unusually large number of interesting cultural features, some of them restricted to one or a few tribes, others more or less common to the whole area.

Not only their ancient religion and traditions, their social organisation, their wooden architecture and carving, etc., but also their languages distinguish the Nuristanis from the inhabitants of the surrounding valleys, which had been converted to Islam at an earlier date.

There is no necessary causal connexion between the various cultural archaic features of this whole area. They are rather due to topographical factors and the relative isolation of the country. It goes without saying that the inaccessibility of these narrow mountain valleys, remote from the great thoroughfares, and not allowing the use of horses for riding or of pack-animals, has contributed to the splitting up into a large number of languages and dialects. For ages this area has been a haven of refuge for tribes from more fertile and inviting localities. Local material and religious culture has, of course, influenced the terminology of the languages, but has not affected their structure and internal relationship.

With the exception of Burushaski - Werchikwar in Hunza - Nagir and Yasin, which has no known relations anywhere else, and which has left but few traces of influence on their neighbours, all the other languages belong to the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European. The oldest known representatives of Indo-Iranian are the languages of the Rigveda in India and of the Avesta in Iran, which were still at the beginning of the last millennium B.C. not more different from one another than the Scandinavian languages of our days.

Iranian languages are, however, found only on the fringes of the areas in question. North of the Hindu-Kush Iranian dialects of an archaic type are spoken on the Pamirs and in Badakhshan. Only in a few places small groups of immigrants have crossed the Hindu-Kush barrier into Chitral and Gilgit.

In recent times Pashto has penetrated into the Hindu-Kush valleys, on the Kunar and Pech right into Nuristan. But the great bulk of the

languages are either of a purely Indo-Aryan type, or belong to the Kafiri group, with which I shall have to deal separately below.

Indo-Aryan and Iranian can conveniently be distinguished by a few striking phonemic features: An Indo-European palatal k' as in Latin decem, 'ten' (c pronounced as k) results in Sanskrit palatal sh, as in dasha, but in most Iranian languages in s (dasa). Indo-European s is retained in Sanskrit, but has, in most positions, changed into h in Iranian, thus Sanskrit sapta 'seven', Iranian hafta. This example also shows that p, t, k became fricatives (f, th, kh) before other consonants in Iranian, as, e.g., in thrayo 'three', Sanskrit trayas.

I shall be using the term Dardic about the Hindu-Kush languages of a purely Indian<sup>1</sup> type, reserving the name Kafiri for a group of languages with which I shall be dealing separately below.

But Sir George Grierson, the eminent editor of the Linguistic Survey of India, in his pioneer book "The Piśāca Languages of North-Western India"<sup>2</sup>, believes that Dardic (including Kafiri) "are neither of Indian nor of Eranian origin, but form a third branch of the Aryan (= Indo-Iranian) stock, which separated from the parent stem after the branching forth of the original of the Indian languages." Some years later, Linguistic Survey of India, Vol.VIII, he somewhat modifies his views and considers that Dardic (including Kafiri) forms a separate group within Indian.

Grierson bases his opinion on the fact that the Dardic languages have, to a great extent, retained Sanskrit phonemic features which had already changed in the Middle Indian languages, such as the distinction between three sibilants and the groups st, sht(ṣt). But this argument would also force us to assume that modern Icelandic ought to be separated from the rest of the Germanic languages on account of its many archaisms, or that the Logodurese dialect of Sardinia is not a true Romance language, because it has retained the 'hard' pronunciation of Latin, e.g. in kentu 'hundred'. There is, indeed, nothing in the Dardic languages which cannot be derived from Old Indian.

Grierson's views were easily excusable in his time, when our knowledge of Dardic and Kafiri was extremely restricted. It is more surprising that some distinguished scholars, relying on Grierson's authority, should still maintain them, when much more, if very far from satisfactory, materials have been made accessible.

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1) Since in this connexion it cannot be misunderstood, I shall use the name Indian for what is usually called Indo-Aryan.

2) Grierson 1900.

Quite recently Professor Braj B. Kachru, in his classification of "Kashmiri and other Dardic Languages",<sup>1</sup> has given an altogether muddled picture of the actual situation, full of grave mistakes, which I feel to be my duty to warn the non-specialist reader against. To give only a few examples: He includes among his Kafir-group languages, as well Wai-ala as Waigali, although these names denote exactly the same language, adding as a separate item its sub-dialect Zhonjigali. Similarly Wasĩ-veri is only another name for Prasun. Not only does he take several Dardic languages to be Kafiri (note especially Pashai and Kalāsha-Pasha(!)), but he also includes Gujuri, which is not at all Dardic, but belongs to the Indian languages of the plains.

It will be convenient to retain the term Dardic for the group of in many respect archaic languages of the Hindu-Kush, although it is difficult to draw an exact border-line between them and the rest of the north-western Indian languages.

The south-easternmost Dardic tongue is Kashmiri. North of it we find Shina, with several dialects, in Gilgit and adjoining parts of the upper Indus valley. An archaic offshoot is Phalura, spoken in some eastern side-valleys of Lower Chitral, closely related to which is Sawi in one village further down on the Kunar.

A number of dialects on the Indus below Shina and in the upper parts of Dir and Swat, Torwali, Bashkarik, etc., are usually grouped together as Kohistani.

The main language of Chitral is Khowar,<sup>2</sup> in many respects the most archaic of all modern Indian languages, retaining a great part of Sanskrit case inflexion, and retaining many words in a nearly Sanskritic form. Khowar possesses a rich treasure of folksongs and tales, and in recent years some books have been printed in Urdu script.

Historically closely connected with Khowar is Kalasha, spoken in parts of Lower Chitral, especially in the western side-valleys. Some Kalash still retain, as the last pagans of the Hindu-Kush, their ancient religion, but it seems to be dying out. According to their traditions the Kalash once occupied Chitral right up to Reshun, but have been driven back by the Khos, advancing from the North.

In the Kunar valley, on both sides of the Pakistani-Afghan border, Gawar-Bati is still spoken in a few villages. Related dialects are, or were till recently, spoken in the Pech valley, in Ningalam (at the opening of Waigal) and higher up in the side-valley of Grangal. A dialect of the Gawar-Bati type is found also in Shumasht, in a

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1) Kachru 1969, pp.285sq.

2) i.e., the language of the Kho tribe.

side-valley of the lower Kunar, surrounded by speakers of Pashai.

A language of a type having affinities with Kohistani to the east is Katarkalai in the hills north-west of the confluence between the Kunar and the Pech, and till a few years ago it was spoken also in Wotapur on the Pech, just above Chagha Sarai.

Pasha(v)i is split up into a large number of widely differing dialects, extending from the lower Kunar and its side-valleys through the middle Pech, Laghman, Alingar, Alishang, Tagau and Nijrau, right up to Gulbahar, and till recently also in parts of the Panjshir.

Pashai is the last remnant of the language of Hindu-Buddhist civilization of Nagarāhāra, Lampāka and Kāpisha, driven up into their mountain valleys by comparatively recent Pashto speaking invaders. The Kurdari Pashais on the middle Pech seem to have remained pagans nearly down to our times.

There remains to be mentioned the still unknown dialect of Shemul, in the uppermost part of the Darra-i Nur. It is impossible to decide to which group of neighbouring dialects it belongs.

It may be added that Tirahi, also a language of a Dardic type, is spoken by a few old people south of the Kabul river, between Jalalabad and the Khyber. The Tirahis were originally driven out of Tirah, on the Pakistan side of the border, by the Pashto speaking Afridis.

Special problems arise regarding the languages spoken in Nuristan, for which I shall retain the now traditional name Kafiri, although the Nuristanis have all, especially since the time of Abdurrahman's conquest but some of them also before, been converted to Islam.

There are four, or, perhaps, five, Kafiri languages:

A. Northern Branch.

1. Kati group, consisting of the closely related dialects of:

a) West Kati in Ramgal and Kulam on the upper Alingar, and in Kantiwo (Ktiwi in their own language), a side valley of the upper Pech.

b) East Kati in the upper Bashgal valley, with Bargramatal as the most important village, and in a couple of villages, founded by pagan refugees from Bargramatal in the 1890es, in the Rumbur and Bomboret valleys in Chitral, above the Kalash.

c) Kamviri in Kamdesh (Kombrom) and other villages in the lower Bashgal valley, with settlements also in Lower Chitral. A few villages in the central part of Bashgal speak a transitional dialect.

In general a) and b) are more archaic, especially as regards the preservation of postvocalic surd stops. On the other hand c) preserves certain unstressed vowels which have been dropped in West and East Kati. Thus, a), b) kɬo 'knife', but c) kaɣo from \*kaɬo.



Also the vocabulary of c) presents some peculiarities. But a) and c) agree in forming the present with n, as against b) t, as in a), c) kunum 'I do', b) kutum.

Kamviri has been thoroughly studied by Richard F. Strand, and Qazi Ghulam Ullah has written a grammar and a vocabulary of his mother tongue.

2. Prasun (Wasī)<sup>1</sup> is spoken, with slight dialect variations, in a valley at the top of the Pech. In its origin it can be shown to be closely related to Kati, from which it has adopted many loan-words, some of them quite ancient and more or less phonetically assimilated. But in its isolation it has undergone a number of striking sound-changes, giving it an aspect very different from that of the rest of the Kafir languages and making it quite incomprehensible to its neighbours.

Thus d has become l, groups of consonants + r have been assimilated, and, most strange of all, an initial stop has in many cases been lost. Examples are Apāk 'name of a pass': Kati Paprok; (Y)ipə 'Kantiwo': Kati Ktiwi (< \*Kitwī), with tv to p, as in c(i)pu 'four': Kati ctwo; ulyum 'wheat': Kati gum. There are also many morphological innovations, and the vocabulary contains a number of archaic words unknown from other Kafir languages.

Especially characteristic of Prasun is the hypertrophy of localizing verbal prefixes, demonstratives and adverbs, defining minutely the exact direction of an action or the place occupied by the object within the gul, which was at the same time the home-valley and the whole world of the isolated Prasunis. Similar features have been developed also in other Kafir languages, especially in Kati, but nowhere else to such an amazing degree.

Prasun has been the object of a thorough study by Georg Buddruss.

B. Southern Branch.

3. Waigali in the side-valley of the Pech which is now usually called Waigal, although this is originally the name of its uppermost village.<sup>2</sup> The dialect variation within this comparatively small valley is remarkably great. A recent offshoot of Waigali is Zamyākī, spoken in Zamyākī (Lindalam), south of Kandai on the middle Pech.

East of Waigal, in the hills close to Katarkalai, we find Gambiri (Gemiri). The vocabulary is very similar to that of Waigali, but the

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1) I retain this Kati name of the valley and the language, the local one being Wasī(-Gul) 'The Wasī-(valley, or world)'. The Pashto name is Parun.

2) The local name is Kalashum (Kalaşum) and that of the tribe Kalasha (Kalaşa). A connexion with that of the Kalash in Chitral is uncertain and at any rate difficult to account for.

morphology, even if of a decidedly Kafiri type, differs so much that it is perhaps rather to be taken as a separate language.

4. Ashkun, with slight dialect variations, in the mountains between Pech and the upper Alingar, and in the large village of Wama on the Pech. It has close affinities with Waigali, but must be reckoned as a separate language.

5. Finally there is Dameli in a single village in an eastern side-valley of southernmost Chitral, between Mirkhani and Arandu. The vocabulary contains a large number of words of a Kafiri type, but since its morphology is rather different, it is difficult to decide whether it ought to be taken as a Kafiri language strongly influenced by Dardic, or as a Dardic one which has adopted a greater amount of Kafiri words than any other Dardic language.

The problem facing us is now: Do we have sufficient reasons for assuming the existence of a separate Kafiri group. As stated above, all those languages which have been classified as Dardic in this paper, are of a purely Indian origin, while retaining certain archaic features which have been lost in the languages of the plains.

Kafiri, on the other hand, is characterized by features which as far as I am able to see, cannot be accounted for as derived from Old Indian, but which indicate that Kafiri must have branched off in pre-Vedic times. They are mainly of a phonemic nature, the morphology of Old Indian and Old Iranian being so similar that we cannot expect to find traces of original differences having been carried down to modern Kafiri.

I can here give only a few examples illustrating the various points in which Kafiri differs from Indian in its phonetical development.<sup>1</sup>

1. The Dardic languages have retained the aspiration of surd stops and affricates (kh,th,ph,ch), while the aspiration of mediae has been given up by some of them, evidently in relatively modern times, or has been replaced by a special tone. Kafiri has given up all traces of aspiration at a very early, pre-Vedic date.

2. In most East Indo-European languages, the so-called satəm group, original palatal k' resulted in a palatal or dental sibilant sh,s. Thus<sup>2</sup> Sanskrit dasha 'ten'; shatam 'hundred' : Avestan dasa; satəm. But in genuine Kafiri words a dental affricate ts has been retained, e.g. in Kati duts 'ten', Prasun leze (from lets-, cf. cpu-lts 'fourteen'; Waigali tsũ 'dog', Dameli tsuna, cf. Sanskrit shun-, Avestan

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1) For further documentation cf. Morgenstierne 1945, 1926, 1929.

2) Cf. above.

sun-. This ts must represent an intermediate stage between the original k' and the sibilants sh, s, just as in Old French cent 'hundred' was still pronounced with an initial affricate ts, from which modern s-. Also Indo-European \*sk' resulted in Kafiri ts, while Sanskrit has (c)ch, as in Kati, Waigali, Dameli āts- 'to come', but Sanskrit ā-gaccha-.

3. In some cases Kafiri ts goes back to Indo-European palatal \*k' + s, Sanskrit kṣ and Avestan sh, as in Kati, Ashkun its, Waigali ots 'bear' : Sanskrit ṛkṣa-, Avestan arsha-. But Sanskrit kṣ may also go back to velar k + s, while Kafiri and Iranian distinguish between these two groups. Thus, e.g. Kati, Waigali maçi 'honey', cf. Sanskrit mākṣika-, Avestan makhshī- 'fly, bee'.

4. In Sanskrit an Indo-European palatal g and a secondarily palatalized g both result in j, while in Kafiri, as well as in Iranian, they are kept apart as respectively Kafiri (d)z and j/zh, Iranian z and j. Examples are Kati dzō 'knee' : Sanskrit jānu-, Avestan zānu-, but Kafiri jī 'bowstring' : Sanskrit and Avestan j(i)yā-.<sup>1</sup>

5. On the other hand Sanskrit distinguishes the corresponding aspirated sounds from the non-aspirated ones. But palatal \*g'h results in h, e.g. in hima- 'snow', just as secondarily palatalized \*g<sup>(w)</sup>h in han- 'to kill'. Kafiri agrees with Iranian in having given up every trace of aspiration, while retaining the distinction between Kafiri dzim, Iranian zima- < \*g'himo- and Kafiri \*jan-, Iranian jan- < \*g<sup>w</sup>hen-.

6. Kafiri retains dental s after u, in which position not only Indian and Iranian but also some other East Indo-European languages change it into sh/s. Cf. Sanskrit mūṣ-, Avestan mūsh- 'mouse', but Kati musä. This is an extremely archaic trait, the implications of which I shall be returning to.

The vocabulary of Kafiri agrees more with Indian than with Iranian. But Kafiri has for thousands of years been exposed to the influence of the neighbouring Indian languages, adopting a large number of loanwords from them. In many cases it is difficult, or even impossible to distinguish between words inherited from a common source and such borrowed at an early date from Indian, mainly Dardic. As might be expected the Indian influence is stronger in the Southern Branch of Kafiri than in the Northern, more isolated and remote one. Thus, to give just one example, Waigali dōsh, Ashkun dus 'ten', but Kati duts, Prasun leze.

Ancient Iranian loanwords are extremely rare. I know only one,

1) Some Kafiri dialects have even retained the extremely archaic form gī, without any trace of palatalization.

viz. Kati nəmoc 'prayer'. But the vocabulary of Kafiri contains a number of words known from Iranian, but not from Indian, without there being any possibility of their having been borrowed from Iranian. We must remember that till quite recently Kafiri was not in contact with any important Iranian language. I shall give only a few examples: Kati wār̃- (<\*wēn-) 'to see' : Avestan vaēn-; Kati kats- 'to look' : Avestan kas-; Kati ew 'one' : Avestan aēva-, but Sanskrit eka-; Kafiri kand- 'to laugh' : Iranian xand-; Prasun yase 'belt' : Avestan vāh-.

There are even a few Kafiri words of apparently Indo-European origin, which are known neither from Indian nor from Iranian. One example is Kati pütsi 'pine' : Greek peúkē. Another, which Professor Hamp has drawn attention to, is Kati zu, Waigali zor, etc. 'milk', which can be derived from \*dzara-, in its turn going back to Indo-European \*gala(k)-, cf. Greek gala(kt-), Latin lac (<\*glakt-). There may be some difficulties in accounting for the exact original formation of the stem, but Hamp's derivation is certainly possible and seducing.

It is not surprising that words of Kafiri origin are to be found, not only in Dameli, but to a less extent also in Dardic languages such as Gawar-Bati, Kalasha and Khowar.

It is not my intention in this brief survey to try to trace the earlier history and migrations of the Kafiri speaking tribes into their present homes. Some local traditions seem to point to the upper Pech valley as their homeland at some stage of their history. If these traditions are to be relied upon we must assume that the Southern Branch was the first to separate from the Northern one. There are some indications of the Waigalis having at one time extended their territory towards the North-East right into the lower Bashgal valley, before the arrival of the Kam tribe. This might perhaps explain that Khowar orts 'bear' which must be a Kafiri loanword, has o as in Waigali ots, not i as in Kati, Ashkun (and Kalasha) its. At any rate the Kams must have left for Bashgal while the Kate tribe still remained in the Kantiwo area, before part of it going west into Kulam and Ramgal and another part towards upper Bashgal.

But our knowledge is so scanty and so uncertain that it would be mere guesswork to try to form any hypothesis on this subject, or on the ethnic and linguistic relationship of the earlier stratum of inhabitants of Eastern Nuristan.

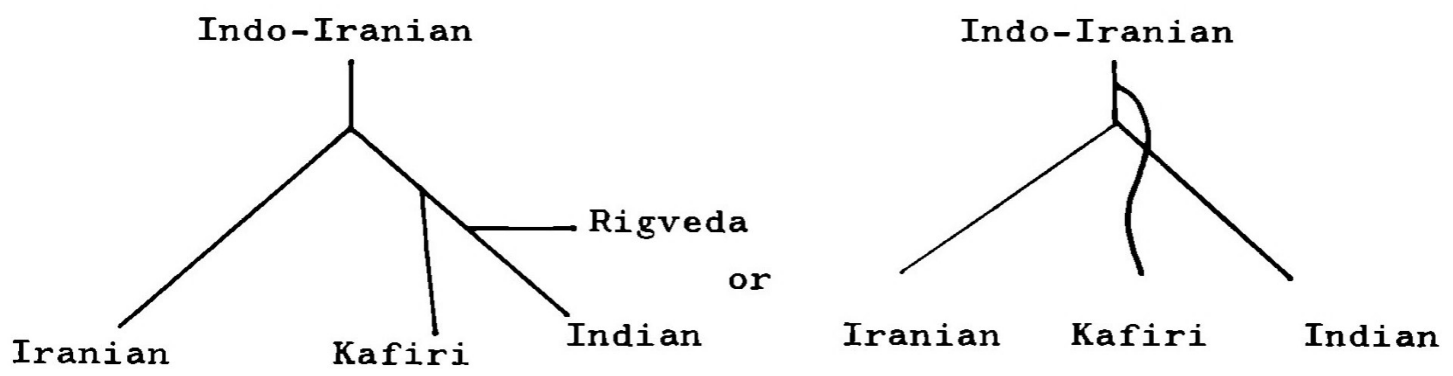
There are still prominent scholars who refuse to consider Kafiri as constituting, or at any rate embodying important elements belonging to, a separate branch of Indo-Iranian. They evidently prefer,



although none of them has, to the best of my knowledge, taken up the problem in detail, to believe that Sanskrit h in hima- and han- has for unknown reasons split up into Kafiri dz and j/zh, resulting in a kind of mimicry of the original Indo-Iranian distinction. And they are willing to accept that Sanskrit sh and ch as well as in some instances ks, merged into Kafiri ts, while Sanskrit sh returned into dental s after u, but remained after r! They must also assume that the Kafiri words mentioned above (such as \*kand- 'to laugh') and several others have been borrowed from some unknown Iranian source, although there is no evidence for believing that Kafiri had, till quite recently, been in contact with any Iranian language except the culturally and politically unimportant Munji north of the Hindu-Kush. I must admit that I find it impossible to share this view.

To me it seems far more probable that Kafiri goes back to the language of an advance-guard of the Indo-Iranian invaders. And I do not find it so very surprising when sometimes historical developments prove to have been much less simple than the models we in our comparative ignorance have been forced to construct.

One problem which I find it very difficult to solve, is whether the "ur-Kafirs" separated from Indian in pre-Vedic times, or if they branched off already before the final separation of Indian from Iranian. As a simplified model we may either assume



The retention of us against uṣ in as well Indian and Iranian might count in favour of the latter hypothesis, but is to my mind not an argument strong enough for making a final decision.

We may perhaps be allowed to indulge for a moment in fancies about how wonderful it would have been if a Kafiri Rigveda or Avesta had come down to us. It would, I feel sure, have solved many puzzling problems about the development of Indo-Iranian - and certainly have raised new ones!

But we ought rather to be grateful that at least some scraps of information are still available to us about a language retaining pre-Vedic elements.

And, apart from this purely linguistic interest, the Kafir languages form an important link in that chain of interesting traits which characterize the cultures of Nuristan, and render the study of this remote area so fascinating.

## A KÁFIR ON KÁFIR HISTORY AND FESTIVALS

Knut Kristiansen

The manuscript from which the following chapters have been selected, begins with a warning to the readers:

"This story of mine is so painful that everybody who hears it, will have his heart broken".

Then follows the title:

"My heart-moving and lamentable story, compiled by Shaikh Abdullah Khan Sahib, a native of the country of Kafiristan, at present residing in Jalandhar Camp."

A little more information is given on p.77 where the author gives his genealogy - not a very long one according to Nuristani standards, only 5 generations, but introduced in proud words:

"My family is known by the name of the Royal (~~šāhī~~) Jandaran Branch, upon which other branches of the Kattes are dependant ... My genealogical tree is as follows: Sardar Maru, Sardar Shit, Sardar Janu, Sardar Kun, Sardar Kashmir, this humble sinner Shaikh Abdullah Khan,"

with a later addition in purple ink:

"Sardar Azar".

I first thought his Kafir name was Araz. Readers of Urdu manuscripts will know that dots are often placed where they do not belong I am very grateful to Mr.Schuyler Jones for having corrected this misreading. He tells me that in Chitral he met the son of the author of this manuscript who told him that his father's name was Azar. In the following I shall use this Kati name.

Azar was the son of Sardar Kashmir, the Kati chief who in 1896, after the conquest of Kafiristan by Abdurrahman, fled from Bragamatal in the Bashgal Valley and settled with his followers - some 600 - in Brumotul in Chitral. His paternal uncle was Maru, identical with Kán Mára mentioned by Robertson as being the chief of all Bragamatal Katis. "Kán Mára is not only the hereditary priest, but appears to be the undisputed chief of the tribe, a place he has obtained mainly through the aid of the Mehtar of Chitrál, Amán-ul-Mulk, who was also his son-in-law. With the help of this ally, eight or nine years ago, he defeated the Ghazab Shah faction and caused its chief to flee from the country. Peace now prevails, but the two households are not yet on visiting terms. Kán Mára has very few other enemies; he has killed

them all."<sup>1</sup>

The conquest of Kafiristan by Abdurrahman is well known from Afghan sources. I would like to add one more description of this event: Azar's own words about what happened to his family. Having given his genealogical tree he continues (on p.77) with a description of olden days:

"All these chiefs have during their reigns ruled over the four tribes with great force and pomp. During their reigns the subjects lived in such peace that each man sat as a king in his own house. The subjects, thriving through the rain of their grace, understood that their rule was beneficent. During their reigns there was really a protection of the subjects in as much as not more than one fourth of the land revenue usual in other countries was taken, and that also (only) after one year. Therefore the subjects were very devoted to their rulers who guided and sympathized with them.

During a period of 1800 years the subjects have not in any way been opposed to their kings nor distressed, and have not started any rebellion or mutiny ...

(p.78) And from the first generation until the third nobody attacked them, and they did not attack anybody."

I shall leave out some family disputes which took place during this third generation, when Sardar Janu divided his kingdom into four parts among his four sons Pazil, Kun, Bodur and Karlu. About Kun, his grandfather, Azar writes:

"Kun governed his kingdom with the utmost diligence and zeal. He had four wives. One of them was childless. The second had one son, the third had three children and the fourth had borne four sons."

(p.79) ... "After Kun's death his second widow's son<sup>2</sup> also died. And ... the son of the fourth widow, my revered father Sardar Kashmir, was appointed chief. And Sardar Maru was charged with the administration of the country. The rest of the brothers were appointed to the commands of the country. But they were all of one mind.

While they were in office, one tribe which always used to oppose them, and whose name was Imshen, made an attack upon them, but was defeated. In this strife both parties suffered losses of the highest order. And on account of this their military strength was weakened and also their number was reduced.

During this interval Amir Abdurrahman Sahib Bahadur, ruler of Afghanistan, attacked the country. After much fighting he defeated them, and the slaughter and bloodshed was so great that rivers of

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1) Robertson 1896, p.305.

2) His name was Mamrot.



blood were running. The readers themselves can imagine how many heroes and devotees laid down their lives (p.80) as sacrifices for the honour of country and people. When they found that they themselves were weak and did not among themselves understand the strength of aggression of the ruler of Afghanistan, they agreed upon the following counsel:

The Nawab of Chitral is an ancient friend. It is desirable to send Sardar Maru to him to make an arrangement with him about getting protection (~~from him~~) until we can free ourselves from the claws of the Amir.

With this intention they dispatched Sardar Maru to (~~the service of~~) the Nawab of Chitral. On arriving there he told his story. But on account of illness the Nawab Sahib delayed in giving him an answer. He became destitute and had to return to his own country.

Then Sardar Kashmir together with many followers started by the other road which leads from Chitral to Bragamatal and arrived at the valley of Bomboret. On their arrival there Sardar Kashmir's companions, his own brother Maru's sons and relatives numbered in all about 600. Sardar Maru did not manage to reach his won home because the Amir's forces captured him on the road and sent him to Kabul with a military escort.

(p.81) When they arrived in Kabul, these people embraced the Islamic creed. And they remained in custody in Kabul for their lifetime.

The five remaining brothers and the relatives of these two chiefs who were left in Kafiristan, agreed to surrender to the Amir. They embraced Islam and began to mind their own affairs.

My thoughtful readers may notice that in one instant God Most High manifested himself so greatly that having enlightened the paganism of the very hard-hearted idolators, he accepted them into the protection of Divine Light, and in the idol temples the calls of Divine Light prevailed.

The Nawab of Chitral and the British Government showed compassion towards Sardar Kashmir and those people who had come with him to the Bomboret Valley in Chitral, and bestowed upon them the tenure of some land for their support. They chose liberty in that place. Three years had passed since Islam was embraced by the subjects of Kafiristan.

Then all sections agreed to rebel. They killed all the judges and magistrates present there and invested the army of the Amir of Afghanistan in one fort.

(p.82) The Amir got angry at this and sent a large army. It arrived in Kafiristan by the Jalalabad route and subdued the whole

of the country. After the victory Amir Abdurrahman, ruler of Afghanistan, ordered a five days' general slaughter. He demolished and burnt all the forts and great towns.

After this victory the people belonging to the ancient families, i.e. the relatives of Sardar Kashmir and Maru, left their own country in dread of the Amir Sahib and came as refugees to Sardar Kashmir in Chitral. They gave up the creed of Islam and again chose their (old) religion. And till now they have in Chitral remained faithful to that religion ... As far as in their power they do not even allow anybody to become a Muslim. But the people of the remaining four sections which after the rebellion did not give up Islam, have become such confirmed Muslims that perhaps such firm Muslims are rare in any country."

Later note in purple ink: "It is quite true that the light of Islam which is found among these new Muslim shaikhs, is perhaps not to be found in Arabia and Turkey."

(p.83) "It is a matter of regret that Sardar Kashmir's brother Maru who was in custody in Kabul died there three years after the insurrection. After that Amir Abdurrahman summoned Sardar Kashmir to Kabul, saying: "Embrace Islam, come back to your own country and settle there in peace".

When this order arrived there , through the mercy of God Most High, he became illuminated by the Muhammedan light, broke the chains of idolatry, became participating of the bounty of Islam and left for Kabul. But Fate did not allot to him the food and drink of Kabul. He enjoyed the intercession of the Prophet. Accordingly, before he arrived at his place of destination, he became a martyr by the hands of his family's enemies on the road. He was buried in Kafiristan.

Sardar Maru's other brothers and relatives remained established in the Bomboret Valley in Chitral and stuck to their ancient religion.

After the Amir Sahib's victory the country whose earlier name was Kafiristan, received the name Jandih-i Islam ("sacrificers of life for Islam"). And the two sections were called Safidposh and Siyahposh. They are still settled there and are known by these names ..."

Additional note in purple ink: "The country has now become known by the name of Jadid-ul-Islam."

Georg Morgenstierne met Azar in Chitral in 1929 and bought the manuscript from which I have made these selections. It has 139 pages, beautifully written in nasta'liq characters. The language is Urdu, which Azar had learnt in India. His style is remarkably clear except

where he tries to write in the high style of Urdu. His orthography is generally correct. Still the manuscript makes difficult reading. First because it is water-stained. Secondly because it has been corrected - at least twice - by the author. The date is not certain. There are references to events which took place in 1908. This is a terminus post quem. A marginal note on p.118 seems to indicate that corrections were made the same year. Other corrections - in purple ink - must be considerably later.

The book falls in two parts: pages 1-83 - a description of the Katis, their customs, religion and history, and pages 85-139 - an autobiography, dealing mainly with the author's life in India.

I have already described the title page. Following this there is a dedication (Azar uses the English word):

"With great respect and veneration I dedicate this book to My Honoured and Powerful Dear Patron, the Pride of the English Nation, His Honour with Exalted Titles, Captain A.A.James, Sahib Bahadur, of the 29th regiment stationed in Jalandhar Cantonment, in the shade of whose kindness this afflicted one, from the year 1898 and up to this moment, has with much luxury and comfort received support - (I dedicate the book) to his renowned and highly esteemed name, the reputation of which has, through the praised-one's military services, established itself in the military world of all India, - with heart-felt yearning, which is always surging like the Ocean.

If (this dedication) is accepted, what honour and nobility (will be mine)!

The humble author."<sup>1</sup>

As far as I know Azar's manuscript is the first book ever written by a Nuristani. Its background is given in the second part: his autobiography. We hear nowadays so often ugly stories about ugly imperialism. In Azar's story there are no ugly imperialists, only a sympathetic doctor of a Panjabi regiment, captain Harris (? Urdu: H-y-r-s), his kind sister, and captain James to whom Azar dedicated his book. Captain Harris brought young Azar from the village of Burdun to Drosh as his servant. When he had to leave India for China during the Boxer Rebellion, he entrusted Azar to his sister who took him to Kashmir and wanted to bring him to England. Azar, however, did not want to go. His only friends were in the regiment, and he says: "To be separated from them would be to have the bandage taken from my wounds and to have salt sprinkled in them". Instead he is

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1) I am grateful to Mr.Ralph Russell, Reader in Urdu in the University of London, for valuable assistance in translating this passage (letter to Georg Morgenstierne, dated 13/10 1966).

employed by captain James with whom he stays till 1908 when the book stops.

During an illness - maybe we should call it a nervous break-down or a religious crisis - Azar makes up his mind to become a Muslim. In his new surroundings he must have felt that he was losing his identity. Living as a Kafir in India, far away from his own people, from the social life of his tribe, from Gish and Imrā<sup>o</sup>, was impossible.

Here is a somewhat abbreviated version of his conversion to Islam:

(p.101) "I said to captain James: Since I have been spending my life in your service, I would like to inform you that I wish to become a Muslim. I want a couple of hours leave.

Then he inquired: Are you becoming a Muslim by your own free will or through conversation with somebody?

I said: With none. It is because to my mind the Muslim religion is good. I have thought and meditated upon every religion. To my mind the Muhammedan religion is the best of all.

Captain James said: Will your family not be dissatisfied and will they not quarrel with you?

I answered: For one thing I am independant and can take care of my own gain and loss. And for another: after death neither parents nor relations will be with me. There will be the Court of the True King."

Then captain James sends a letter to doctor Harris, who writes back that if Azar becomes a Muslim by his own free will, without any compulsion, it is all right. Finally Azar goes to the imam of the mosque and is converted to Islam. He writes about it in his own peculiar style:

"I removed the rust of my unbelieving and the blackness of my heart and was made a devotee of Islam. And my heart shone like a mirror!"

After his conversion Azar went on leave to Chitral where he tried to convince his tribesmen in the Bomboret Valley of the excellence of Islam. He also sent petitions - first to the Government of India and then to the Emir of Afghanistan whom he met in Lahore - about the sad conditions of his tribe. He was promised an answer, but there never came one from Kabul.

The first part of the manuscript is of course the most important one. It is a description of the Kati society of the Upper Bashgal Valley immediately before the conquest by Abdurrahman. Azar did not know English so his description is independent of Robertson's. From where he got the idea of writing his tribe's ethnography is unknown.



I do not know if there exists such books in Urdu from the 19th century. In any case, Azar has written a book rather unique in its kind. He has managed to arrange his material in a most useful survey of Kafir culture.

Georg Morgenstierne has published some pages from Azar's manuscript.<sup>1</sup> Some years ago he also gave a lecture on it in the Norwegian Academy of Science, but this was in Norwegian and has not been published. A new, complete translation - the result of a seminar in the Indo-Iranian Institute of Oslo - will soon be printed with the Urdu text in transliteration. I have chosen chapter 19 as a specimen. It deals with festivals. Much of this information will be found in Robertson's "The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush", but not all. I have prepared a translation in what I believe is Azar's own style, without embellishments of any kind:

(p.46)

#### Festivals

Like other peoples, such as Hindus, Muslims and Christians, (the Katis) have their own fixed series of festivals. According to their rules there are five big festivals each year, and besides some smaller ones. The five festivals are:

1.Gish Namuch, 2.Nilon, 3.Ishtri-chal-nat, 4.Giche, 5.Munvon.

Gish Namuch. This festival comes at the beginning of spring and lasts for eighteen days. During the first fifteen days music is played in the evening. Their intention is to worship and render service to the idol Gish and to worship the arrival of the New Year.

(p.47) In short, during the first fifteen days only they play music in the evening. But during the last three days they dance as well in the morning as in the evening on the dancing-ground which has been prepared in advance in a certain place. In this dance the very highest chiefs and noblemen take part. Also their deblol<sup>2</sup> takes part in it together with them and delivers a sermon on the worship of this idol. And all the people put on their best dresses. But the common and poor people are not allowed to take part in this dance.

Nilon. When sixty days have passed from the Gish Namuch the Nilon festival is celebrated during the time of real heat. It is like this: This time there is a festival of twenty days. During the first two weeks, after supper has been taken, dancing and singing, which is considered to be a kind of puja, take place in honour of all the gods on the dancing-ground on which a long and broad stage has been built. Music is played, and the puja takes the form of a musical performance.

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1) Morgenstierne 1933.

2) Priest.

(p.48) During this (festival) there are no compulsory regulations regarding dress. Ordinary (clothes) are sufficient. Nor are there any regulations regarding those who are admitted. Whoever wants to join in, can do so. When two weeks have passed, then for four or five days they splash one another with water, just as Hindus splash each other with colour during the Holi festival, and they soak (each other's) clothes (in water). During the last three days there is a dance, resembling that mentioned above, on the dancing-ground both morning and evening. And the very best people put on their finest clothes and take part in it. This is also supposed to be a puja to their idols. Further at night every man has the very daintiest food prepared, each in his own house, and distributes it among the others.

Ishtri-chal-nat. This festival comes forty days after the Nilon. The season is late summer, and it lasts for three days. During these there is dancing morning and evening in the manner mentioned above. The dress and the ceremonies of the dance resemble the before mentioned ones, and food is distributed in the same manner.

(p.49) Giche. This festival comes one hundred days after the Ishtri-chal-nat and lasts for twelve days. During the first seven days people dance at night. Afterwards, on the eighth day, they all go out, far away, to fetch wood. The sticks are of pine, deodar, etc. Next day they break off and bring branches of juniper. When these branches have been brought home, they fumigate with them.

On the fourth day, at night, they bake loaves, each weighing ten seers. And they are baked in the name of the god Mon. At night, after twelve o'clock, in every house they pour some ghee, etc., on the loaves. Then they throw a little ghee, juniper twigs and some bits of this bread into the fire and worship. They mention also the names of the other gods in whose name the loaves have been baked and worship them in the same way.

(p.50) When they have eaten the loaves, they make figures of their cattle (cows, goats, sheep, etc.,) from the thin willow twigs. From them are also made two shepherds. The meaning of these images is this: This is our cattle, and these are the shepherds. Then they take the images of the shepherds and the cattle and put them at the place which has been made in order beforehand. And in front of the door they pile up a shelf with brackets and place the images on it. Their intention is to make a kind of petition to God Most High. They also entreat the idols (saying): We shall get a kind of cattle which resembles that belonging to the idols. After that every man paints on the walls of his own house pictures of horses, cows, goats, etc.,

with black colour which they have collected in the course of the twelve days. And every man makes this according to his rank as it is their custom from olden days.

(p.51) On the fifth day they take the branches which have been previously collected and cut them up. From them is made, separately for each man, a bundle which is from 15 to 20 feet long. For women and children it is from 6 to 10 feet long. A bundle of branches is made in the name of every person - male, female and child. And a pregnant woman builds one for her unborn child too. In every house so many bundles are made as there are persons. When they have made these bundles, they bind the remainder of the very thin willow twigs together with intervals of 1 1/2 foot, and at the upper end they bind juniper twigs for burning. At night they first give a feast. Then they make a loaf of bread in the name of every single god for the sake of worship. At twelve o'clock in the night a puja is made in the manner described above in the name of the idols for whom the loaves have been made. But let it be remembered that for this puja no loaf is made in honour of the god Mon. After the puja all the people go to sleep.

(p.52) At three o'clock in the night all people awake. First ~~of~~ ~~all~~ they put on very fine clothes. And first of all people the deblol puts fire to the bundle of twigs in his own house and goes out. And with loud voice they shout such such! This is a word of benediction in their religion. Afterwards they remain in the village for rather a long time. Then they go to the altar of the idol Disain - the deblol and the pshu<sup>1</sup> first, and after them all the menfolk. When all the people are assembled there, they worship the before mentioned idol, accompanied by the deblol and the pshu, who now becomes unconscious, and the deity speaks through him in an occult way. Then the pshu mentions the name of the person whose bundle of twigs is the longest and whose worship is agreeable to the goddess. He takes the bundle belonging to that person, brings it to the door of the idol and raises it there. And he takes (the bundle) from about two or four persons, not from more.

(p.53) Apart from this the pshu tells what kind of offerings are agreeable to the deity and explains it to the people. On this occasion the deblol and all the people, standing with folded hands, entreat the pshu, and he entreats the deity. Before her all the

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1) 'The pshu also is their established (religious) guide. Whatever the deities (want to) reveal, is charged upon him. He becomes unconscious, and in this state the commands (of the gods) become audible to him. And then the pshu proclaims the commands to the people'. (p.71-72).

people tell their needs and receive the answer to (their prayers) through the medium of the pshu. Afterwards he regains consciousness, and the offerings to this idol are concluded. And people discharge their obligations in presenting the offerings imposed upon them. During this time they all go on singing and playing without musical instruments (?). At dawn they return to their homes. Till the men come back, all the women go on singing at the dancing-ground. Not until the men have returned home, the women go back home from the dancing-ground. And the men get together at the dancing-ground and dance. For quite a long time music is also played as an accompaniment. And everybody moves about, eating and drinking. When they have eaten and put on very fine clothes, they dance the whole day accompanied by music. When evening comes, they are all back in their houses and their day (of festival) is ended.

(p.54) Seven days after this event everybody makes (images of) cattle and shepherds from willow chips. And when they, each in his own house, have worshipped the gods, they make a fire and throw (the images) into it. This festival is held in winter, just as the Divali of the Hindus.

Marvon.<sup>2</sup> This day (of festival) comes at the beginning of summer, in the last days of the month Chait. It takes place twenty days before the first festival and lasts only one day. The arrangement is as follows: At early dawn the women rise and prepare food. About 10 o'clock in the morning the food is brought to the graveyard. There they throw a little food, water, ghee, sweets, etc., at the images of their own relatives and ancestors. The idea is that it reaches the deceased. The remainders of the food they divide amongst themselves in that very place and return home. On their way back they sing on the road songs which are rather melancholy.

(p.55) When they reach the village, they enter the dancing-ground. The songs which are sung there are chiefly deriding the men, and the men feel ashamed on account of them. So they all assemble and ask the women to stop the frolic and ask for pardon. Then the women stop singing and go home. When they come home, everybody eats food. When they have eaten, the men put on the dancing dress such as they have been wearing during the previous dances and go to the dancing-ground. There they perform music together with dances. And they sing the songs about their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers which they had sung at their death. And the heirs of the

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1) Whereas Munvon, p.46!



deceased whose songs are sung, bring milk, wine, etc., and all sorts of fruit and distribute them amongst them. The idea of this is that (the food) reaches the deceased (ancestor) whose name is mentioned.

(p.56) Apart from these there are a few quite small festivals the description of which would be too lengthy. They are therefore not described (here) ..."

## NATIVE ACCOUNTS OF KOM HISTORY

Richard F. Strand

Traditions of the Kom tribe provide a picture of ethnic distributions in eastern Nuristan (Kafiristan) prior to 1890. According to these accounts, some of which are corroborated by accounts from other neighboring tribes, ethnic distributions were rather different some fifteen generations ago than they are now.

The traditions state that the diverse ethnic groups of Nuristan were once concentrated in the middle Pech basin of central Nuristan. The Kom inhabited the village of Kamédol in the side valley of Kamgél. The Kšto, Mumó, and Binyó inhabited the hamlets of Küst, Mum, and Büni, respectively. Ktívi, Sēru (Vāmā), and Kalaşüm (the Vaygal basin) were then inhabited by ancestors of the present inhabitants. In eastern Nuristan the Ĵaží occupied the present site of Kamdesh, and the Vay extended as far east as Kuṇ (Koṭya).

Although the chronology is indeterminate in many cases, major tribal movements apparently occurred in the following order. The Kšto moved from Küst eastward to the Ničingél and Dúnul valleys, and over the lowlands of the Lanḍay Sin valley from the confluence of the Ničingél and Lanḍay Sin rivers to Kamú. The Ĵaží retained the upper slopes of the Lanḍay Sin valley.

The Binyó moved from Büni to the present site of Binóřm, a hamlet near Kamdesh. They gained much of the cultivable area on the upper slopes of the right bank of the Lanḍay Sin, including land bordering on the present ward of Pabústō (the 'East Village') in Kamdesh.

After a surprise attack on Kamédol by combined forces from Sēru, Ktívi, and Kalaşüm, the surviving Kom families fled Kamgél and moved east to the site of the present village of Saskū, up the Lanḍay Sin from Kamdesh. Finding this site unsuitable, they moved to Kamdesh. The Ĵaží, fearful of the warlike Kom, retired peacefully from Kamdesh to safer quarters down the valley.

Through a series of wars the Kom encroached on Kšto, Binyó, and Ĵaží territory until they became masters of the entire lower Lanḍay Sin basin. The Kšto were left with only two small isolated areas around the villages of Kštořm and Dúnul, and the Binyó and Ĵaží were absorbed by the Kom and reduced to client status. The Kom expanded into the Kunar basin; they intermarried with the Vay inhabit-

ants of Kun and gradually obtained Kun and some other villages along the Kunar. At their greatest expansion they controlled the Kunar valley from Bargam to Nagar, but their suzerainty in this area has been greatly reduced by the Afghans in recent times.

## INVASIONS PRECEDING THE CONQUEST OF NURISTAN

Wazir Ali Shah

Professor Kakar in his interesting lecture on the conquest of Nuristan by Amir Abdur Rahman Khan of Afghanistan has given a detailed picture of the whole campaign. During the lecture he has mentioned about the invasions of this area prior to the one made by the Amir.<sup>1</sup> In this connection I would like to add some informations to expand the brief mention of relations between the Kam tribes and the former Rulers of Chitral, made in Mr. Kakar's talk.

1. Chitral's first known contact with an invasion of Nuristan was made in the beginning of the 16th century when Raja Wai, the Kalash(-Kafir) Ruler of Bumburet invaded Lotdeh and sacked Burgamatol bringing back many prisoners including twenty girls. It is said that he made them dance in the nude which angered the gods who cursed him and his family.
2. In about 1540 AD the Rais Ruler of Chitral (who was Muslim) sent an expedition to Kamdesh under the command of Mohammad Beg Timuri. He occupied the valley and got tributes from the Kams in the form of ghee, honey and other articles. This tribute continued to be paid to the Rulers of Chitral until 1895-96 when Nuristan was finally annexed to Afghanistan, and sent even after that for many years.
3. In about 1728, on the failure of the Kam tribe to send the tribute, Mehtar Shah of Chitral personally led an expedition to Nuristan and subdued the tribes. Two of his generals were earlier killed in fighting against them.
4. During the 1760's, Mehtar Khairullah, the Khushwaqt Ruler of Mastuj who also held Chitral, led an expedition against the Kams to punish them for supporting Ex-Mehtar Mohtara Shah Katur of Chitral against him. On his return from the expedition however he was ambushed near Urtsun by an Afghan force supporting Katur and killed in fighting.
5. Mehtar Nizam-ul-Mulk of Chitral also invaded the area in 1893-94 on their refusal to pay the annual tribute. He sacked Lotdeh and brought back over 150 headmen as prisoners, including Ishtaluk. He and his family were expelled to Badakhshan where they became Muslims and later returned to Chitral. They were given lands at

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1) cf. Kakar 1971, p.186sq. (note by the editor).



Gobor in Lotkuh where his son Jana lived and the family possess the property to this day. Some of the Mehtars also married in the family.

6. Following the Afghan invasion in 1896 a large number of the Kam came over to Chitral and were settled in the upper Bumburet and Gobor. They were allowed to retain their old religion and culture, the last Kafir dying in the early thirties. The remaining however embraced Islam voluntarily and are now called 'Bashgali Sheikhs'.

## THE COSMOLOGY OF THE RED KAFIRS

Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk

The following notes were from one named Chanlu of Urtsun village on 30th November 1937 about the mythology of the Red Kafirs.<sup>1</sup> He was last person following the old religion, but some months later he too was converted to Islam. Urtsun is a large village on the Chitral/Afghan border and was the stronghold of the Red Kafirs (i.e. Katis) in the pre-Islamic era.

Creation. In the beginning there was only one God. He created the earth. It was shaking all the time so he scattered bits of stone upon the earth. These became like nails and the earth settled. The surface of the earth was very soft and even. Then God created a large iron pillar and fixed up the earth on it. The whole surface of the earth was full of devils, so God created a god and kept him in concealment and named him Mani. When he became strong he fought many deadly battles with the devils and killed many of them so that there was room for human beings on the earth.

After that God created two more gods, the name of one was Bagiz and the name of the other was Giz. God had created these two gods to help Him in the creation of all the other gods and creatures. After that the first human being was created.

God ordered the first human being to perform the sacrifice in the name of Giz and Bagiz, so a pile of stones was gathered as an altar, and until this time both sacrifices have been performed in Urtsun.

Birth of Giz. There was a lady named Outhiz. She had no husband but Imra ordered so Outhiz became pregnant. Giz was in the stomach of his mother for eighteen months. Giz used to speak to his mother from the stomach but did not like to come out. Outhiz was very much teased and entreated her son to come out, but Giz did not obey. Then Outhiz planted a walnut tree. The tree branched out into eighteen separate branches; the tree grew rapidly and reached the sky. The mother told the child in her stomach to come out and see this magnificent tree because there was no other tree like it in the world.

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1) The same man, Čanlū, was Morgenstierne's informant in 1929. Cf. Morgenstierne 1953. Here the correct transscription of the names.

At last the child came out by bursting the stomach. The child then sewed up the stomach with a steel needle. Then the child sat on a chair. He possessed an excellent medicine called im, so the mother came to life again. This treatment gave the woman new light and wisdom. The woman saw that the branches of the tree had bent to the ground, so she put thin iron pillars under them to hold them up. Eventually this walnut tree produced seven hundred and twenty maunds of walnuts. Giz gave these walnuts to his army along with many other nourishing foods. When the army was strong enough he waged war on Sami. In the battle Sami's wealth was plundered and many of his followers killed. After this successful war, Giz asked his people to call him Laymoch (brave man).<sup>1</sup> During this war Giz performed some miracles. He hit a rock with his spear which became a firm mountain which prevented the enemy from passing. In this way he escaped pursuit. On another occasion when they reached the Bashgal river, and were unable to cross it, Giz asked the people to procure a hornless bull and to sacrifice it. All of a sudden a stone bridge appeared over the river, and the army of Giz were able to cross over. On yet another occasion, they reached a great plain. By this time all their rations had been eaten up and nothing was left, so Giz pushed his spear into the ground, by doing so all sweet roots of herbs came out on which the army fed themselves to the full. At last one day he disappeared from his people. He went to Parun and bellowed like a bullock, in a beat pasture afterwards he was heard bellowing loudly in Poroidur and after that he was seen at the top of a ridge called Atser.<sup>2</sup> There also he bellowed. Since then he was not seen.

The Root of Some of the Religious Ceremonies. Once upon a time there was a great village at the saddle of Pythasoon in Urtsun. The people of this village were very wealthy, they had so much milk that they used big cakes of cheese for throwing weights and on account of abundance of wheat, they used to make targets out of bread for their bows and arrows. All the time they were very mean and unreligious. Instead of sacrificing bullocks and goats they used to sacrifice cats and dogs.

Once a god disguised himself as an old crippled man and sat by the spring which gave water for drinking purposes to all the villagers. The womenfolk who went there to fetch water, teased him very much,

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1) compare p.67.

2) Edelberg 1972, p.35, mentions the "peak of Azei" towering the point of junction of the Parun and Kantiwo rivers.

even some of them spat on his face. At last one woman came. She had only one child. She took him to her house and made good arrangement for his food etc. He asked several questions from the child and the child answered them correctly. After that he ordered the woman to bring some water from the spring in a big pitcher. The man then washed his hands and sprinkled the water three times in all directions. At each sprinkle he uttered: "Such!" Then he lit a fire and placed small twigs of juniper on the fire. Then again he sprinkled with his hand the water saying "Such" all the times. In this way he showed the woman and the boy the method of sanctifying a place which was polluted by un-religious deeds.

He had with him a stick with two heads. He did not stay with them to pass the night but went away, but he advised them not to get out of the room if there was an earth-quake during that night, but they could get out at sunrise. "Then search for this stick of mine, where you find this stick there build a malutsh (altar) in the name of Giz." So it happened that a very fierce earthquake shook the village that night. Next morning when they came out at sunrise, they saw that all the houses of the village were raised to the ground except theirs. Then these people began to stay in a cave.

The people from Veron came to raid the village but to their dismay they found the village destroyed. Except for this house, there was no other house standing. On entering the house they found nobody there, but the household utensils were all there. All the raiding party went away to their village leaving behind only two men to find out what had happened. Every night they saw a fire but in the daytime they could not find it. Next night they again saw the light. That day one of the two men whose name was Bahadur (brave man) came upon the cave where he found the child and mother. His other companion also came. He wanted to kill the woman and the child but Bahadur did not allow him to do so, he said the woman was his wife and the child his son. After that Bahadur remained with them. They named the son Dawam. The woman related all the story to Bahadur, so the three of them started to search for the stick. After a great search they found it on the saddle of a ridge. They built an altar at the place. Ever since a small goat is sacrificed at this altar annually.

Creation of Moni. Imra created Moni out of his own breath. All the world was full of devils, he concealed Moni from all other creatures even from angels. In those days there was a very powerful family of devils. The head of the family was called Lazoro. They had many



fight with Imra. They were so strong that they captured the sun and moon.

Imra ordered Moni to go and find out where the sun and moon were in captivity. Moni went all alone. He spent many days in search. At last he came upon sixty of the devils in a jungle. There was a big log. By putting in a wedge into it he separated the two sides of the log a little. Then he asked the devils to put in their hands in the split and to pull at it. When all of them put in their hands in the split he pulled out the wedge. By doing so both the sides of the log came together and the hands of the devils remained caught in the middle. So those sixty devils perished in that way.

These devils had a mother whose name was Badiluk, she was a very wise woman. She was the first woman to invent the water-mill for grinding flour. She always lived in that water-mill; when she saw Moni she was very angry. She did her best to ask pardon of Moni. Moni gave her a small jug as a present. This jug was never full however milk was put into it. Moni told the woman that she had gained all the wisdom of the earth so to let him know where the moon and the sun were concealed. She informed Moni that there was a great family of devils called Dizano. They had their lodgings in the air. Their fort was tied to the ground with a silk cord, the cord was so thin that it could not be seen but when the crops were thrashed on a thrashing floor and the chaff thrown in the air, the chaff stuck on the string which was tied to the earth. At last by this tactic means he found the thread. Moni had a brother, Muskotuk by name. He was an iron smith; he prepared iron arrows for the bow. After getting the arrows Muskotuk placed them on the ground, but Moni at once took them up and sanctified them by performing the "scu" ("Such"?). Moni told his brother that on account of doing this sinful act of placing the arrows on the ground he had become a "janger" (polluted) and had become a human being.<sup>1</sup>

Moni with the first shot struck the thread, but with the second one the thread was broken and the fort was destroyed to the ground. To his great dismay he could not find the sun and moon there.

Moni again started on the search. At last he came to the house of the seven devil brothers. All the brothers had gone for shooting and the mother was left alone to cook their food. He asked the woman to give him a refuge, but she said her sons would be very angry

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1) Similar motive in the mythical history of the dynasty of Gilgit, cf. Leitner 1896, p.9f. Supernatural descent of iron workers: Jettmar 1957.

to find him in the house. Moni told her that he could be very helpful in performing the household duties while her sons were away. At last the woman agreed. When the sons returned she went to the gate-way to receive them and got the loads of her sons and kept them aside and gave them all possible comfort. This time her sons had a very unlucky shooting party and could not find any game at all, but they were promised a game at their house. The mother pleaded to take mercy and keep Moni with them and said he would be very useful in performing the household duties. At last they accepted to keep him. They gave him all liberty but asked him not to open the door of a certain room. When he became very familiar with the mother, he asked her what there was in the room. She told him that the sun and the moon were concealed in that room. If the door was opened they would fly and go back to heaven. One day when they were all out for shooting he pushed his finger into a window of that room. It pierced through and the finger became golden on account of the golden light of the sun. He tied up the finger to conceal it and pretended it to be wounded. The mother and her sons broke the stone into pieces which was supposed to have crushed the finger of Moni.

Moni had found a ball of thread and a bunch of needles in the house. He learnt that both had a magic in them. By throwing them the needles would turn in a thick impenetrable forest and the ball of thread would become a thick fence which could never be penetrated. He took both of them with him. One day, when all brothers had gone for their usual hunt, he broke the window of the room with a kick. In an instance the sun and the moon reached the sky and once again all the earth was illuminated. He ran away to escape. When the devils found the world again illuminated, they chased him. When they came close, he threw the bunch of needles which became a very thick forest. The devils started to cut the trees one by one, at last they finished them all and continued their pursuit. When they again overgot him he threw the ball of thread which became a very thick fence. The devils did their best but could not cut the fence. In this way Moni escaped and reached his destination. Imra was very pleased with him and gave him great honour. After that the devils had never succeeded in catching hold of the sun or the moon.

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON A KAFIR MYTH

Georg Buddruss

The story of the liberation of the sun and the moon is attested in several different versions in the folklore of the Hindukush. But as far as we know only in the Prasun valley, famous since Robertson's times for its "religious atmosphere" and for the interest of its inhabitants in all matters of religious tradition,<sup>1</sup> this story is found in a particular mythological context. It belongs to a group of "creation myths", better called "primeval myths" ("Urzeitmythen"). For these Prasun myths tell nothing about the creation of the world. The world is thought to have always existed. These myths deal with primeval events at the beginning of time, when man was not yet created and the "valley" or the "world" (Prasun gul means both "valley" and "world") was inhabited only by gods and giants (Prasun yus). It was at that time that the gods, for the most part Māra and Māndi, wished to create men, or, as the Prasun myths put it "to sow the seed of man". The myths never describe how the creation of man was performed, but they relate in detail the actions of the gods, whose aim was to render the "valley" inhabitable by man, how they restricted the rule of the god of ice to the winter, how they brought light and water into the "valley", how they instituted the cult ceremonies of the Prasun clans by giving them their proper "idols", and how they invented agricultural implements. All these mythical events, at a time when life as it is now began, took place in the Prasun valley. Everywhere in the valley people know and can show the places where the gods assembled, where they held their councils and where they taught men. A red streak in a rock bears witness to the stream of blood that flowed over the stone when Māndi killed the giants who lived there before man was created. The myths usually contain only place names from the Prasun valley. Other men and valleys hardly play any role in them, they are generally outside the mythical worldview and do not share the intimate contact with the Divine.

The liberation of the sun and the moon was one of these primeval divine deeds. From other versions of the story recorded by other scholars in different regions of the Hindukush it might seem that the sun and the moon for some unknown reason had been stolen from

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1) Robertson 1896, p.379.

the sky. But my most reliable Prasun informants, especially Nur Mohammad from Zuzum, who had a keen interest in the religious past of his tribe and probably still believed the myths he remembered (he died as a very old man shortly before 1970), insisted on the point that the sun and the moon had not been removed from the sky as they had never been there before.<sup>1</sup>

Here is a brief summary of the main contents of this Prasun myth as recorded by me.<sup>2</sup> Formerly the "valley" was dark. The sun and the moon were not yet in the sky, but kept by a giant in a cave or "house" near the place where later on the village of Pronj (Purunz; Sěč) was founded. The god Māndi wanted to create men. But men cannot live without light. So Māndi in the shape of a young boy, went into the house of the giant and won his and his mother's confidence. The giant allowed him to move about everywhere, but told him not to touch a certain door. While the giant was absent, Māndi opened the door a little and put his finger into the gap. His finger became golden, and the gold could not be removed. The boy wrapped his finger in a piece of cloth pretending to have hurt his hand. The next time he opened the door a little wider and put his arm into the gap. His arm became golden, too. Finally, while the giant was absent, Māndi opened the forbidden door by force. Blinded by the radiant light, he found a waterfall in the middle of the room, on the right side of the water there was the sun, on the left the moon. Māndi bathed in the shining golden water. Then he placed the sun on his right and the moon on his left shoulder. Mounted on a black horse, he rode out. The dark "valley" suddenly became bright. With a dagger, which

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1) The situation is now somewhat complicated by the fact that L. Edelberg has recently published two versions of the myth from Prasun (Parun) which do not contain any clear allusion to the "Urzeit" and the creation of man, either. (Edelberg 1972, No.6A pp.47-54 and No.6B, pp.54-58). Given the extremely fragmentary character of our knowledge of Prasun mythology and the disturbed state of the Kafir tradition it is, of course, impossible to decide, whether Edelberg's informant of 1953/4 had sources different from mine, or whether he (or the interpreter?) in his Persian rendering consciously or unconsciously omitted the motive of the "Urzeit". One of the last two possibilities is, I think, at least more probable than to assume that my informants, relating the myth in their own language, should have added arbitrarily this particular feature of a pre-Islamic worldview, which since their conversion to Islam (1896) is no longer valid for them.

2) My Prasun material, texts and interviews, collected in 1956 and 1970, has not yet been published. But the texts recorded in 1956 were made available in a literary German translation to P. Snoy for his thesis, where he has made use of this information in a very careful and reliable way (Snoy 1962). For Prasun texts 54 and 65 of my collection, summarized here, see Snoy 1962, pp.86sqq.



he found folded together in one of the horse's ears, he killed the giant<sup>1</sup> and his mother after a long fight. For some time Māndi remained with the sun and the moon on his shoulders in the neighbourhood of Pronj. The god Māra came from the village of Kṣtōki (about one hour further down the valley) and said: "If you keep the sun and the moon with you, what shall all the men do what I am going to create in my part of the valley? Let me carry the sun and the moon up to the sky so that all men can enjoy their light and warmth." Māndi agreed. Māra took the sun and the moon up to the sky, ordered them to revolve and said: "The sun shall be for the day, that men may warm themselves, the moon shall be for the night, that the giants may warm themselves."

I do not intend to attempt to give a structural interpretation of the myth now. Out of several questions which may arise in connection with this myth only one shall be raised here: What does the water mean which Māndi finds in the room between the sun and the moon? This water is just mentioned without any obvious consequence for the further development of the story. Prasun informants, when asked this question, seemed to be surprised themselves and were unable to offer any explanation.<sup>2</sup> Could it be that an ancient motive, no longer understood, has been preserved here? It is tempting to assume that in a more original form of the myth not only the sun and the moon, but also the water were concealed by the giant in his cave and liberated by Māndi for the benefit of mankind.

Such a hypothesis does not seem to be entirely unfounded. If it is tentatively accepted, the Kafir myth recalls a famous mythical concept of Ancient India, often alluded to in the hymns of the Rigveda (2nd. millennium B.C.). Here the water is locked up by a monster (Vṛtra) in a rock. God Indra slays the monster (and his mother, Rigveda 1.32) or splits the rock and makes the water stream forth. Now, very often also the sun is mentioned in this connection, e.g. (Rigveda 1.51.4) "when thou, Indra hadst slain the monster, thou madest the sun rise up to the sky so that it could be seen". Indra's deeds were primeval deeds, for it is stated that he did all this "for Manu", the forefather of mankind, so that human life could be possible. In the Rigveda, it makes sense that the sun and the water are liberated by Indra at the same time, for, according to Vedic cosmology, the

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1) In my texts it is one giant with seven heads, but according to Edelberg's versions the mother had seven sons.

2) The water occurs also in Edelberg's texts as a "pool" (Persian hauz)

sun is thought of as floating in the celestial waters.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Vedic and the Prasun myth would seem to have the same basic idea: Human life is first of all dependant on light (including fire) and water. At the beginning of time ("Urzeit") both the light and the water were under the domination of demoniacal beings. A divine hero (Indra or Māndi) overcomes the demon by cunning and strength. Men remember his deeds and praise his gifts, as they owe their existence to them. The Vedic and the Kafir texts as we have them are separated by more than 3000 years. Nevertheless, one may ask whether this striking similarity in the essential concept of the two myths is due to mere chance.

But it is only this basic idea that the two myths have in common. As to the details, there are differences.

While the name of the divine hero in the Veda is Indra, his name-  
ake in the Kafir pantheon, Indr, has nothing to do with this mythic-  
al complex. But this is a point of minor importance and may be a  
consequence of interior changes and developments within the Kafir  
pantheon. Though the name of Indr is known in Prasun, he was ob-  
viously not worshipped there and was said to be a god of the neigh-  
bouring Ashkun people, especially in Wāma. Indr had special connect-  
ions with wine and viticulture. In most parts of former Kafiristan,  
Indr seems to have lost the dominant position Indra once occupied  
among ancient Indo-Aryan tribes. This process is perhaps still re-  
flected in certain Kati myths, where Indr is fought and defeated by  
other gods like Imra and Gish.<sup>2</sup> The role of the Vedic Indra can in  
many respects be compared to the role played in Prasun by Māndi. It  
is Māndi who is believed to have liberated the celestial luminaries.<sup>3</sup>  
Māndi is also in other contexts the strong divine hero and foremost  
of the gods in their fight against demons and giants, the enemies  
of gods and men. With the Vedic Indra, Māndi shares his ability to  
appear in numerous shapes and disguises.<sup>4</sup> As in this story he changes

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1) Vedic scholars differ as to details of their understanding of the Vṛtra and Vala myth. In the essential points I follow the interpretation given by H. Lüders (1951, esp. vol.I, pp.183-195).

2) Robertson 1896, p.388; Morgenstierne 1953, p.177.

3) But this seems to be the case only in the southern villages Paški and Zuzum, where the name of the giant who concealed the sun and the moon was said to have been Esperegrā. But in the northern villages Pronj and Dewa, Esperegrā or Külür(w)a is the name of the mythical hero who liberated the luminaries! This is now also confirmed by Edelberg's notes from Pronj (1972, p.39, 48, 57). There are more instances in my material where texts from the lower villages deal with Māndi, while quite similar deeds are attributed to Esperegrā in the upper part of the Prasun valley. This point needs further clarification.

4) cf. e.g. W.Rau 1966, p.73.

himself into a boy, he takes in other Prasun texts various forms, e.g. that of a falcon or of a bull.

A more important difference between the Vedic and the Prasun myth is the fact that the liberation of the waters, so prominent in the Veda, is not mentioned in the Prasun story or is to be found in it only in a rudimentary form no longer understood, as I have assumed. Now, a different tradition was current in Prasun about how the first water came into the "valley" (or the world). After Māra had created the first men, he began to teach them agriculture, and built a mill which he first tried to drive with milk. When he failed he asked the goddess of water, Lunang, to come down into the valley and drive the mill. This text has been discussed elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> If we may apply "historical" categories in this context, it would seem that this story, as it deals with the invention of water-mills, belongs to a "younger" mythological stratum. It is perhaps a conceivable hypothesis that this myth may have replaced other beliefs about the arrival of water among men.

But the main differences between the Vedic and the Prasun myth do not concern what I consider to be the nucleus of its meaning but the easily separable special setting of the Prasun story. So the motive of the forbidden door or forbidden chamber is entirely missing in the Veda, but has numerous parallels in Eastern and Western fairy-tales.<sup>2</sup> As an example I quote from Grimm's collection the German tale about the "Marienkind".<sup>3</sup> There, a poor wood-cutter's daughter is taken to heaven by the Holy Virgin. She is told not to open the thirteenth door. But she disobeys this order and then puts a finger into the gap. Her finger becomes golden through the mighty splendour of the Holy Trinity concealed in the forbidden chamber. The gold cannot be removed from her finger. The girl is punished for her disobedience and has to return to earth.-

The motive of the capture and liberation of the celestial luminaries occasionally occurs elsewhere too.<sup>4</sup> As this is often combined with

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1) Buddruss 1960, pp.200-209.

2) Cf. Tawney 1924, p.233 and 1928, p.153. For the horse motive in this context cf. also Toporov 1968, p.118.

3) Cf. Bolte and Polivka 1913, vol.1, p.21.

4) For the sake of brevity, I refer for parallels to Harva 1938, p.181; Bolte and Polivka, vol.3, p.288; Motive-Indices in Finnish Folklore Communications, XXXIX, No.106, p.109.

On the other hand, the Prasun material is in some respects similar to a myth recorded with a Buddhist tinge by D.Schröder among the Monguor of the Amdo region. There too we find the situation of the "Urzeit", the origin of man, water, light, warmth and agriculture, and the rise of the luminaries from the "black earth" to the "blue sky" (Schröder 1970, especially pp.67, 71, 132, 134, 146).

theft and tricks, it can often be taken to be a "Variante des Prometheus-Mythologems" as pointed out by Snoy.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the interpretation of related texts is difficult. So Robertson<sup>2</sup> gives two versions of a Kafir myth which seem somehow to belong to our subject, but may be "inexact" as Snoy puts it.<sup>3</sup> Here Imra himself without any obvious reason takes the sun and the moon from the sky.

Without going into further details, it must be admitted that there are often several possibilities of interpreting the texts, especially when there is no mention of an "Urzeit" and creation of man, and not even an allusion to it. So W.Lentz<sup>4</sup> has proposed that the Prasun myth "may be connected with the winter solstice, when Imra is saving the Sun from the evil demons". The motive of the gilded finger and arm, one may add, could then perhaps reflect the fact that "the first beam of the rising sun on the winter solstice was to hit a statue of the god inside of the temple".<sup>5</sup>

From my point of view, I need not reject such an interpretation. The main difference between Lentz's and my argument seems to be that in Lentz's opinion the liberation of the luminaries (including the moon?) was thought to take place annually, while I have emphasized that Prasun informants have described it as a primeval event. Both views, however, may not necessarily be mutually exclusive. It is a well-known and widespread experience of ethnologists that mythical events of the beginning of time may be recognized over and again by man in the recurrent phenomena of nature. Different approaches from different viewpoints are necessary to contribute towards a better understanding of the very complex character of the Kafir mythical tradition, which has come down to us in small fragments only, either in statu moriendi or after its final extinction as a living religion.

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(continued) But the liberation of the luminaries from demoniacal domination is missing in this context.

1) Snoy 1962, p.86.

2) Robertson 1896, p.385-387.

3) Snoy 1962, p.89.

4) Communicated by Edelberg 1972, p.52 note 37.

5) ibid.



## WESTERN PARALLELS TO THE DEEDS OF IMRA

Wolfgang Lentz

### The Theses.

- a. A number of mythological traits recorded during the past eighty years in the popular oral literature of Kafiristan (Nuristan) about Imra and his divine and human companions correspond to some features of the legend of Mithras attested mainly on archaeological monuments of the first centuries of our era that are found at different places in Western Asia, North Africa and Europe.
- b. Certain features hitherto not fully understood of the Mithraic monuments receive light from the Nuristan material.

### The Argument.

- I. In the legend of Mithras we have to reckon with an underlying epic relation similar to a story or stories of the Kafir deity Imra. The relationship to other stories of Mithras, their local variations, and a possible common source of the two traditions require separate investigations.
- II. A Kafir myth concerning the liberation of the sun and moon has come down to us in eight versions, each of which places the luminaries on either side of a person or animal or object. A corresponding balanced distribution of light symbols quite common in the famous Mithraic bull-killing scene, but also in other contexts, is not a merely formal device - as it seems to have been universally considered till now -, but indicates that their significance may lie in the content of the legend.
- III. The Kafir myth divides into six phases with theft and force as leitmotifs, centering round a house, castle or city of the demons and a magic horse with a weapon in its ear and ending with the ultimate setting - or restoring - of the function of the luminaries by Imra.

In the Mithraic legend we have to reckon with two camps, a demonic and a divine one. The bull in the alleged bull-fight with a house as a transitory refuge of the animal is either a vehicle or a symbol of the luminaries or one of them. There are intermediaries between the demons as the primary possessors of light and disposers of the year and Mithras as the final distributor of time for the benefit of agriculture. Other scenes, not only the rock-birth, but also the water miracle and the hunt, stand in direct or indirect relation to Mithras'

achieving domination over the daily and yearly course of the sun and moon.

### Conclusions.

If these observations point in the right direction, the character of Mithraism as an essentially moral appeal to imitate its central figure in bravery, endurance and self-sacrifice will have to be reconsidered. The prevalence of light symbols point to an identification with cosmic powers of the adherents' innermost psychic forces. The primeval liberation by a saviour and his helpers of the light gives the hope to an eventual salvation of the souls - a dominant religious theme of the time.

## IRANIAN INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURE OF THE HINDUKUSH

Karl Jettmar

German ethnologists called the Kafirs a megalithic people ("Megalithvolk")<sup>1</sup> or Kafiristan a "megalithic centre"<sup>2</sup>, that is to say, the culture of the Kafirs was considered as a phenomenon strictly separated from the great civilizations of Western Asia. It seemed to be part of a cultural stratum which is otherwise accessible to us only by archaeology of far back periods (3rd - 2nd millennia B.C.) or ethnography in distant regions (e.g. South-east Asia and Indonesia). This tendency can be observed even in recent studies made by Snoy and myself.

On the other hand, indologists tried to trace survivals of the religion of the Aryan immigrants to India in the folklore of the mountains.<sup>3</sup>

I think such efforts are legitimate. But I would propose to start from a more cautious hypothesis. I think that every explanation of the religion of the Kafirs and the Dardic peoples has to take into regard that the singularity of Kafiristan and other mountain areas indeed is preconditioned by geography but became really effective when the surrounding lowlands were conquered by the expanding force of Islam.<sup>4</sup> A bar was laid which was not opened before the conversion of the mountain valleys themselves. For Kafiristan proper this means an isolate development between the 11th and the 19th centuries A.D. Before the 2nd millennium A.D. the exchange of men and ideas went much easier.

Of course even during this period of separation Kafiristan was not a closed system, but the contacts were restricted by permanent warfare with the Muslim world deeply influencing the social system of the Kafirs.

Accordingly the explanation of the documents of Kafir religion needs a careful analysis of all information presented by archaeology and written sources for the spiritual history - Geistesgeschichte - of the surrounding areas until the end of the 1st millennium A.D.

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1) Jensen 1956, p.178.

2) Baumann 1955, p.370.

3) e.g. Buddruss 1960, p.208.

4) cf. Masson-Romodin 1964, pp.131-223, and especially Lohuizen - de Leeuw 1959.

This is necessary for the Eastern Dardic areas too. There we should discern between the main valleys and the backwaters of inaccessible regions. The isolation was never this complete or this permanent.

Let us now pass over to the special topic of this lecture, the Iranian influence. I think that many evident parallels between Iranian and Dardic institutions and ideas are not due to a common heritage going back into Indo-Iranian antiquity but to diffusion in the course of a long and complicated symbiosis. I only can illustrate my thesis by a few selected examples.

1. An unexplained detail in the iconography of the wooden statues manufactured especially by the Kalash tribe is that the rider sometimes is depicted sitting on the back of a two-headed horse.<sup>1</sup> Originally my idea was that this simply meant a sign of still higher rank than the normal rider statues. However it is strange to see that coins of the Kushana period minted in the name of Kanishka on the back side have a deity with a Phrygian cap riding on the two-headed horse. According to the legend of the coins it is the central deity of the Iranian pantheon Ahura Mazda.<sup>2</sup> I think this should be a hint that we have to study the iconography of all coins from the Saka, Kushana and Hephtalite periods. Perhaps we shall find more parallels of this kind.<sup>3</sup>

2. Many mythical stories of the Kafirs contain the element that sun and moon were in the hands of giants and had to be set free by the force and cant of the gods. We are told that Mandi puts sun and moon on his shoulders and mounts his horse. At Imra's request he hands them over, and Imra makes them wander over the sky. In Robertson's work we find a passage that Imra fixed sun and moon to the sides of his body and rode on into the mountains.<sup>4</sup>

Now I would like to connect this motif with the reliefs on the memorial steles of several Indian tribes, e.g. the Bhils. In many cases they show the image of an armed rider over whose shoulders

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1) Cf. Shakur, Pl.VII/2, for the specimen in the Peshawar Museum. In fact the animal has two heads and four legs in front, but then the bodies run together, so there are only two hind-legs. This may be recognized in a better photograph in the Catalogue of the exhibition "5000 Jahre Kunst in Pakistan" 1962/63, Nr. 574.

2) Cf. Rosenfield 1967, pp.82-83; Duchesne-Guillemin 1960, Pl.VII, 132, 193. When I told this R.Goebel he said that he made the same observation years ago.

3) As far as I see there is no statue of this kind from the Kafir area proper, but perhaps the Kalash have preserved an iconographic detail formerly common in a larger area. Cf. Edelberg 1960, and Siiger 1951.

4) Snoy 1962, pp.86-89; Robertson 1896, p.385 and 387.



sun and moon are placed. Many illustrations of such monuments were collected by Koppers.<sup>1</sup> Koppers already saw that the iconographic details are taken over from more civilized neighbouring peoples: Rajputs and Gujaras. I am indebted to Professor Hermann Goetz for the suggestion that such memorials belong to a tradition going back to the late Gupta period. The first to propagate this mode were martial tribes entering India from the Northwest, like the Gujaras, later on disappearing in the big melting pot of the Rajput castes. In the religious heritage of such groups the solar deity had a special place.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps on such stelae the dead hero was represented in the shape of Yama. The god Yama was a deity of death on the one hand - but he was also considered a son of Surya.

We have to keep in mind that on the area of present-day Afghanistan astral deities played an important role during the later half of the 1st millennium A.D. Sun and moon are depicted as armed warriors in the frescoes on the walls of the monastery of Fondukistan.<sup>3</sup> Even in the frescoes of Soghdian towns such astral deities are rather frequent.<sup>4</sup> Even more important is a passage in an astrological treatise (*Brhatsamhitā* XI, 61) mentioning that tribes living on the northwestern border of India like Pahlawa, White Huns and Avagāna had a special affinity to the mythical dragon whose tail is Ketu and who is said to devour sun and moon periodically, causing eclipses. This motive is still preserved in the popular traditions of the Gilgit Agency. We are told that the celestial bodies are swallowed by a dragon, but they may escape by a cut in his neck.<sup>5</sup>

It was always a question how Yamarāja could become the central deity of the Kafir pantheon.<sup>6</sup> I propose to look for the explanation in this very milieu.

3. Already in the beginning of the 19th century, Mountstuart

Elphinstone was told that the Kafirs "drink wine, both pure and diluted, in large silver cups, which are the most precious of their possessions". In 1953, almost 60 years after the conversion to Islam such cups were seen for the first time by a European, Lennart Edelberg. He was able to collect important information about them and finally he could acquire some specimens, now in the museums of Kabul and Aarhus.<sup>7</sup>

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1) Koppers 1942, e.g., fig.10.

2) Cf. v.Stietencron 1966, pp.226-272.

3) D'jakonov 1954, pp.147-149.

4) Belenickij 1954, pp.68-71.

5) Cf. Census of India 1931, XXIV, p.323, and Ghulam Muhammad 1907, p.108-109.

6) Morgenstierne 1953, p.163.

7) Cf. Edelberg 1965, pp.153-155.

I want to draw attention to the fact that there is a considerable similarity between the wine-goblets of the Kafirs and the cups which appear in the hands of the feasting community on wall-paintings of pre-Islamic Middle Asia. They can be observed at Pjandžikent.<sup>1</sup> Even more convincing are the affinities to the silver and gold vessels held by the ladies which we see on the paintings of the south wall of the eastern hall at Varachša.<sup>2</sup> The men's goblets are somewhat different.

Al'baum is convinced that such cups used in Tocharistan in a ritual or even religious context<sup>3</sup> were highly appreciated and imitated by the ruling class of the nomadic warriors in the steppes. A hoard consisting of such vessels made from embossed silver and gold sheets was found at Malaja Pereščepina (near Poltava), one specimen in a nomadic burial in Northern Ossetia.<sup>4</sup>

It seems reasonable to suppose that such goblets were also exported towards the Southeast for the ceremonial use of a nobility of Hephtalite descent ruling in Gandhara. They were copied by the common people and were finally brought to the mountains where the tradition lingered up to the present day.

4. However it must be stressed that these observations do not mean that all Iranian influences belong to the post-Christian era. In the Swat valley Stacul was able to give us a chronological sequence through several millennia by excavating a rock shelter near Ghālīgai.<sup>5</sup> Four of the periods observed are characterized by pottery with definite western or northern Iranian traits. According to the chronology of Stacul they belong to the time between 1500 - 300 B.C. This could mean that during this span migrations from the West reached in several waves the borders of the Indian subcontinent. Most of the metal objects used by Heine-Geldern for tracing the way of the Aryans rather belong into this context.<sup>6</sup>

Some pieces have an Anatolian or Transcaucasian appearance. So we may ask whether the bands were under chieftains of Thraco-Phrygian origin.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps it was this kind of military expedition which gave birth to the myth of Dionysos' glorious ride through Asia bringing

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1) D'jakonov 1954, p.104, Tabl.X.

2) Al'baum 1960, pp.126-162.

3) The building where they were observed at Pjandžikent was a temple.

4) Al'baum 1960, p.178.

5) Stacul 1967, 1969a, 1969b, 1970.

6) Heine-Geldern 1956. I would like to add other finds, e.g., the golden stag from the Hazara district (Allchin 1968, p.150) and the hoard of bronze objects from Darel including a trunnion axe (Jettmar 1961).

7) Cf. Cuyler Young Jr., 1967, p.26.

wine and wine-drinking to the ancestors of the Kafirs.

5. On the other hand highly archaic looking elements with a specific Iranian touch may turn out to be recent loans.

In Punyal, one of the Ismailitic enclaves of the Gilgit Agency, there are collective tombs. Adolf Friedrich discovered a well preserved monument of this kind, an isolated building near the village Bubur with a subterranean chamber for the exposure of the deadbodies. It was still in use only 40 years ago. On the other side of the Gilgit river there were found other vaults in a ruined state.

I could collect additional information during my stay there in 1964. Publishing the material<sup>1</sup> I explained the peculiarities by the fact that Bubur is not far from the mouth of the Ishkoman valley, an important route of traffic to the Wakhan and the Pamirs. Nearby a hoard of bronzes was found perhaps indicating an immigration of Sacian groups during the 1st century B.C. They may have been on the way from Middle Asia to India.<sup>2</sup> Among the Sacian (North Iranian) tribes of Middle Asia there is a long tradition of collective tombs with freely accessible chambers for the decomposure of the deadbodies (parallel to the Zoroastrian practice), so I concluded that we may consider the Bubur complex as a survival of this early impact.

After my lecture at Moesgård<sup>0</sup> - which forms the basis of this article - Wazir Ali Shah from Chitral, present at the session, pointed out that the former dynasty of Chitral, before the line of the recently deposed Mehtars and perhaps identical with the Sangli dynasty mentioned by Hashmatullah Khan<sup>3</sup> had a vault of quite similar construction. It was still preserved during his life-time but was demolished because of its flagrant un-Islamic character.

Now I was told that in Punyal the first construction of this kind was made for a man who tried to establish a local rulership only twelve generations ago, shortly before or after the introduction of Islamic faith. It is quite possible that such a man copied the royal institutions of Chitral, among them the burial rites. Punyal had been under Chitrali dominance several times between the 14th and the 16th century. The Ismailitic missionaries too came from this direction - and they had started from the Badakhshan. So it seems possible that customs which existed as survivals among the Tadjik population had a rather untimely diffusion into the Dardic area. Further arguments for this thesis I mentioned already in 1967.<sup>4</sup>

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1) Jettmar 1967, pp.69-72.

2) Litvinskij 1963, 1964.

3) Jettmar 1957 I, p.190.

4) Jettmar 1967, p.71.

## KALASHUM POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Schuyler Jones

The term Kalashum is used by the people of Waigal Valley, Nuristan, to refer, particularly in a political sense, to all the nine villages of Waigali-speaking peoples. The valley, with a total population of perhaps 10,000, is in an isolated area on the southern watershed of the Hindu Kush range in north-eastern Afghanistan. Waigal Valley is culturally part of a larger area which was called Kafiristan up until 1896 and which includes peoples speaking four different Indo-Iranian 'Dardic' languages.

The people of Waigal Valley trace descent through males and this system of unilineal descent reckoning is the principle upon which political groups are formed. Political affiliation, particularly the degree of obligation to give support, is usually determined solely by reference to the lineage system. 'Usually' because in 1968 the first evidence of factionalism was observed and it gave rise to a political situation in which political affiliation was - for the first time as far as we know - based upon considerations other than those of agnatic descent.

Waigal Valley and its tributary valleys are steep, narrow, boulder-strewn, V-shaped gorges, the slopes of which are covered with evergreen oak (*Quercus Balut*). Most of the villages are located approximately 6,000 feet above sea level. Each village is separated from its neighbours by lateral spurs branching out from lofty ridges and the average walking time from one village to the next is 4-6 hours. None of the villages can be reached on horseback, nor can donkeys be used as pack animals.

The majority of the Waigali-speaking peoples have never been outside the valley. Each extended family is economically self-sufficient. There are no shops, markets, or organized systems of exchange in the valley. Afghan currency, while not unknown, plays no part in the daily lives of the people. Economic values are expressed in terms of goats or cows (ten goats equal one cow) or cheeses (two cheeses equal one goat).

The villages (average 200 households) are supported by an economy which combines the production of grain (millet, maize, barley, wheat) on irrigated hill terraces and a system of transhumant animal husbandry (mainly goats, but some cattle and a few sheep) involving a



spring move from winter stables near the villages to high mountain pastures for the production of cheese, butter, and other dairy foods. The general pattern is one in which the women are responsible for grain production, including soil preparation, planting, manuring, irrigation, weeding, and harvesting, while the men care for the livestock and make dairy products.

Each village in Waigal Valley is politically autonomous. At the village level social control is maintained within the framework of the lineage system by two institutions: the malavey and the duvey. The former is a group of men chosen each Spring by village elders and given, for one year, the authority to deal with certain problems arising from the various economic activities. The malavey also have supervisory or regulatory responsibilities in that they coordinate agricultural activities such as the maintenance of the irrigation system, harvest of vegetables and fruits, and the movement of livestock from one pasture to the next as the season advances.

Village laws (deši šara) are handed down orally from generation to generation, but may be modified by elders in the light of experience and altered circumstances. Elders have influence rather than authority (though in special cases authority may be temporarily granted to them by senior members of a lineage involved in a dispute) and disputes are settled by mediation rather than by formal court hearings followed by the pronouncement of legally enforceable judgments. Each village has its own elders who are regarded as being influential not merely because of their age, but because they are wise, experienced, skilled in debate, have a reputation of impartiality, and are renowned givers of feasts. The most outstanding men of this category are well known throughout the political community - the nine villages of the Kalashum - and such men may be asked to mediate in inter-village disputes.

When a dispute arises the men who mediate are called duvey. There is no group of duvey existing independently of disputes. The number of men who may act as mediators in a dispute varies from one or two to perhaps 20 or 30, depending upon the magnitude of the breach and the level of segmentation at which the breach occurred. Mediators are usually chosen by the plaintiff and receive no fee.

An examination of the manner in which Kalashum society is organized to deal with socially disruptive situations focusses on the role of the mediator in dispute settlement, but an examination of the processes involved in restoring social order reveals the equally important activities of litigants' senior agnates who invariably act in an advisory capacity and, unlike the mediators, are in a position of

authority vis à vis plaintiff or defendant, as the case may be.

The segmentary nature of Kalashum clans and lineages, the extension of the segmentary principle to include villages and territorial rights, and the political obligations of membership provide the individual with security for himself and his property. Kalashum dispute settlement procedures are designed to minimize the number of people involved. The political segments based on agnatic descent are seen by elders as potential blocs which, however much weakened by internal dissension, must always present to other blocs an appearance of unity. Success in re-establishing peaceful relations between opposing groups depends largely upon whether or not mediators can correctly estimate the kind of settlement that is most likely to gain the acceptance of both sides. Then, by urging one side to give and the other to accept, they may succeed in bringing about peaceful relations. Mediators can propose, not dispose.

The theme of Kalashum society is competition, though it is achieved by intra-group cooperation. Many disputes requiring mediation are symptoms of rivalry rather than causes of hostility and dispute settlement often involves competitive feasting between rivals who use the series of occasions to further their own ends.

Kalashum society is rigidly stratified into social classes. The atrožan constitute the politically significant and numerically dominant group within which status can be achieved and rank acquired by engaging in such socially esteemed activities as raiding, where rank is determined by the number of men killed, or by feast-giving where rank is determined by the number of named and hierarchically ordered public feasts that have been given. Rank alone, however, is insufficient to gain a man political influence.

A socially lower class is that of bari. They are craftsmen, mainly blacksmiths, jewellers, woodcarvers, builders. Prior to 1896 they were bought and sold by atrožan. Their houses are separate from those of atrožan. There is no intermarriage, they are not allowed to own goats, have no rights in pastures, no voice in government, and are barred from competition for rank.

A still lower class is that of šewala, a second group of craftsmen who produce baskets, clay pots, and leather goods. The same negative social and political sanctions apply to both bari and šewala. It is only recently that bari men allow their daughters to marry šewala.

The developmental cycle of domestic groups is described as the Waigali people themselves visualize the process. The resulting structure, the boundaries of each segment determined genealogically, is at once a charter for cooperation and a diagram of inter-group

competition and political opposition. It is a structure which can be examined socially, economically, and politically at a series of levels ranging from that of the compound family through six generations to the major lineage segment.

A combination of factors - ecological, economic, political, social - bear upon the relationship between the size of a lineage segment and its viability. If a lineage has decreased to the point where it is too small to function adequately in village affairs - particularly in matters of feast-giving and the taking of vengeance - it is incorporated into another lineage. This change is marked by a 'joining together feast' (eken-tay-dūl). The resulting lineage is known thereafter by the name of the lineage which absorbed the smaller group.

In marriage both bridewealth and dowry are exchanged, quite substantial amounts of livestock, goods, and foodstuffs being involved. Among atrožan bridewealth is approximately 220-250 goats. Bari and šewala give half as much. Dowry given by atrožan is from 1 to 1 1/2 tons of grain and half a ton of cheese.

Arranged childhood engagements are regarded by elders as the cause of high incidence of runaway wives. Two factors which operate to maintain the high rate are the ever-available assistance offered by sympathetic women who are eager to be involved in marital intrigue and cultural attitudes of both young men and women which romanticize extra-marital affairs and elopement even though such cases are often terminated by homicide. An unhappily married young woman may be encouraged by other women to run away with another man and her husband may then be encouraged by his peers to follow and kill them.

Competitive to a high degree, the atrožan of Waigal Valley have developed their economy far beyond the dictates of ordinary subsistence requirements in order to use the surplus for social rather than economic purposes. There is an elaborate hierarchy of ranks possessing scarcity value and open to competition. The attainment of these ranks is the chief means of expressing rivalry between individuals and groups within a village, as it is the way to achieve social and political significance. Each rank position is named and associated with special symbols and prerogatives. Ranks must be achieved in strict order, starting with the lowest, and they become increasingly difficult to achieve as the requirements for each become increasingly difficult to fulfill.

Earlier, there was a second type of competition for prestige involving a parallel set of hierarchically ordered and named ranks, each with its own symbols and prerogatives. Achievement of these ranks did not involve the economic resources of a group of agnates but de-

pendent upon the raiding activities of individuals where success was measured in terms of the number of men killed.

Rank attainment is not an end; it is a means to an end, a way of demonstrating to the community that here is a man worthy of their esteem. In this sense rank attainment is a political campaign.

Together the nine villages of Waigal Valley constitute a political community. The political field concept can be used to examine the relations which each village, independent of the others, establishes outside the political community. The village thus occupies a focal point with two overlapping political areas: one - the political community - where the competition is for scarce social and political resources (prestige, status, influence) and is expressed by feasting, and the other - the alliance - where the competition is for scarce economic resources (goats, pastures, forests) and is expressed by raiding. Together these two spheres constitute the political field of a village. The political community is characterized by a high degree of stability; the political alliance is subject to sudden changes.

Even though Kalashum villages are politically autonomous, the political organization at the village level provides a structure that is congruent with those in other villages and this makes it possible for the autonomous village to temporarily become an active part of a larger political unit. When the internal or external threat that occasioned the coalition has been removed the village returns to its usual autonomous state. This segmentary system provides the building blocks with which a larger and more effective political unit may be built.

There seems to be a limit to the size of political units that can be held together by this organizing principle. Its optimum level of segmentation appears to be the village, where strength of agnatic ties and common interests and rights in territory are strongest. Permanent villages sharing common territorial boundaries can settle differences by mediation - either through the efforts of their own mediators or those from a third, suitably neutral, village. Where the two villages are of different political communities the leading elders act as mediators. On a still larger scale of political activity, the villages of one political community can unite against the threat of aggression by another. But this seems to be working at the limits of this type of political organization.

Theoretically, under this principle of combining ever larger units in opposition to other similar units, the next stage would be the amalgamation, however temporary, of two political communities in opposition to a threat posed by a similar force. In practice, the units



become unwieldy, communications are poor, the immediate interests of the components (villages) tend to assert themselves over the less urgent demands of the coalition and the political conglomerate fragments. The point has been reached where the interests which seek to hold it together are weaker than the conflicting interests of its component units.

Kalashum political organization is above all oriented toward dealing with injuries to individuals which in turn result in the alignment of opposing groups. It is equipped to deal with political stress applied to a particular point - any point - in the social structure. It is suggested that, without modification, it is unable to deal with political phenomena which, by their very nature, do not focus on individuals and therefore do not cause a response in which opposing groups of approximately equivalent strength become politically active. This type of political phenomena is new in the experience of Waigali elders and its appearance has caused a new form of political activity to emerge: factions.

Political factions made their appearance in Waigal Valley in the summer of 1968. Within a year the people of the valley were sharply divided. Villages, clans, lineages and families were split on the issues raised by faction leaders. By the Autumn of 1969 the leader of the faction that seemed certain of winning had been shot to death by the leader of the less successful side (who was subsequently killed by the brother of the dead man) and factions had ceased to exist in the valley, partly because no one had sufficient prestige or courage to step forward and replace the dead leaders.

In summary then, the Kalashapeople of Waigal Valley<sup>1</sup> have no indigenous centralized form of government. There are no 'chiefs', nor is there a noble family providing hereditary leaders. There is no position or office of authority. In this society the only authority is that of the male head of an extended family over the members of that family. At the village level outstanding individuals - good speakers, givers of feasts, wise, impartial and experienced men - acquire influence which can be utilized politically, especially in the settlement of disputes. This in turn may lead to ever-increasing involvement in inter-village affairs, which is the main goal of those elders with political ambitions. The social and political worth of an individual is directly related to the extent to which he is asked to act as a mediator in major disputes or give his opinion on matters of village-wide or inter-village concern.

Mediators receive no fees and there is no other economic incentive

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1) Not to be confused with the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral

which might attract an ambitious man. In any case the mere possession of wealth or its accumulation for increased personal comfort is not a goal in this culture. On the contrary, an important man (salmanaš) is one who has, among other things, publicly distributed wealth by giving feasts on a large scale. This may be done to such an extent that hardship results for the feast-giver and his family. The feast-giver's gain is that over a long period of years he acquires the esteem not only of his fellow-villagers, but of all the Kalashum, provided that he also fulfills societal expectations in a wide range of other social situations. The direct expression of this esteem is that disputes and other problems are brought to him in the expectation, based on past experience, that he will be able to provide workable solutions. The degree to which he is able to bring the parties in a dispute round to where they are in a mood to agree to his proposals is the measure of his influence. His role is the honoured one of peace maker and as peace is restored in one difficult case after another, so his influence spreads. One listens to such a man. His opinion carries weight. Such men, by using influence rather than authority, guide the political affairs of the Kalashum.<sup>1</sup>

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1) The fieldwork upon which this study is based was carried out at intervals beginning in the winter of 1966 and concluding in the summer of 1970. For further references to published material on Nuristan see Jones 1966 and 1969. A further study based primarily on Robertson's 19th century material, is Jones 1967. Two other articles relating to Waigal Valley are Jones 1970 and 1972.

# PRINCIPLES OF KINSHIP ORGANIZATION AMONG THE KOM NURISTANI

Richard F. Strand

The Kom Nuristani are a sedentary tribe of farmers and herdsmen who occupy a well-defined territory covering the lower Landay Sin basin and parts of the Kunar-Chitral basin in Kunarhā Province, Afghanistan, and Chitral State, Pakistan. The Kom inhabit several villages, the chief of which is Kómbřom (Kamdesh), located at an elevation of 2000 m. and overlooking the Landay Sin near the confluence of the Ničingəl valley. In 1968 there were 410 occupied houses in Kómbřom with a total population of 1750.<sup>1</sup> The total Kom population is probably slightly under 4000. The Kom speak a Nuristani language which they call Kamvíri; it is one of a group of mutually intelligible dialects which Morgenstierne has called 'Kati'.<sup>2</sup>

Bonds of kinship are the most pervasive social bonds in Kom society. Kinship (jatrėvor), as the Kom conceive it, is the state of mutual support and good-will which should exist between kinsmen (jótr). Principles underlying the types of kin ties in Kom society include patrilineality, complementary filiation, bilaterality, affinity, and adoption.<sup>3</sup>

Patrilineality. The Kom view any individual as belonging to any one of several 'branches' (có:) by virtue of the individual's position in a patrilineal descent system. Out of context a statement like aské imó paco:stə :zə 'He is of our branch' may ambiguously identify a person as a member of a minimal agnatic lineage, a maximal agnatic lineage, a tribe or other ethnic group, or a caste. On the basis of the contexts in which such a statement occurs, we may distinguish

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1) These figures are based on a census of every household in Kómbřom, which I undertook in the fall of 1968. The figures given by Jones (1967: 13) were 'based on informants' estimates' and are in reality much too high.

2) Morgenstierne 1926, S.40.

The observations presented herein are based on two years of linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork with the Kom tribe. I resided with the Kom from June, 1967 to May, 1969, mainly in the village of Kómbřom. My research was partially funded by grants from the South Asia Program, Cornell University, and from Teachers College, Columbia University.

I am grateful to R.Lincoln Keiser of Wesleyan University for commenting on an earlier draft of this paper.

3) In an extended sense jatrėvor may include the relationships between affinal or adopted relatives, although in the primary sense jatrėvor denotes only the relationships between cognates.

two categories of branches: ethnic groups (including castes) and agnatic lineages.

Ethnic Groups. Each inhabitant of the Kom area belongs to a particular ethnic group on the basis of his pedigree. A Kom (fem. Kómi) is any person who is a patrilineal descendant of Kom, the reputed progenitor of the Kom tribe. Non-Kom residents of Kom tribal territory include the Ĵaží, who were the inhabitants of Kómbřom before the Kom arrived, the Binyó, who once held considerable territory around Kómbřom but were reduced to client status by the Kom, and the barí, who constitute an artisan caste of former slaves. These non-Kom groups own houses and fields within Kom territory, but they do not own rights to summer pastures.

Agnatic Lineages. The Kom are organized into a ramifying agnatic descent system. They denote the members of any branch of the ramifying structure by suffixing the term -dare 'agnatic descendants of' to the name or nickname of the apical ancestor of the branch. Thus the Dümúdarə are the patrilineal descendants of Dümú, the Laṇédarə are the patrilineal descendants of a man nicknamed Laṇé ('Mangy'), the Sú:ro-Baḍildarə are the descendants of Baḍíl, son of Sú:ro, etc.

Maximal Lineages. Within such a system any male is a potential node in the ramifying structure, and the agnatic descendants of any male constitute a potential branch. However, only certain males in the genealogy are conventionally recognized as apexes of branches, and their agnatic descendants constitute the maximal lineages of Kom society. Male members of a maximal lineage call each other tódbřo 'agnate'. Female agnates are called ĵižími 'daughters of agnates' by their male agnates, while they in turn call their male agnates tatkūr. The maximal lineage is traditionally the fundamental unit of Kom society, and all tódbřo are bound by mutual obligations of support and political allegiance.

Minimal Lineages. Most lineages are further segmented into minimal lineages. Some lineages, such as the Dümúdarə, are only partially segmented according to a 'spinal cord' model. In this case some Dümúdarə are also Mérəgdarə, Malígdarə, Túrúgdarə, or Ġramnyódarə, while the remainder are 'pure' Dümúdarə with no sub-lineage affiliation.<sup>1</sup> Other lineages, such as the Garégdarə, are

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1) Jones's inset diagram of the 'lineages of three clans' (1967: endpiece) does not correctly depict the minimal lineages of the Dümúdarə, nor does it accurately portray the relationships of the three 'clans' (Cúgdarə, Garégdarə, and Dümúdarə) to each other. Figure 1 shows a partial genealogy of the Kom down to the minimal lineages. All lineages found in Kómbřom are shown, but some lineages found exclusively in other villages are not included. The diagram was compiled from data supplied to me by a number of



fully partitioned into minimal lineages, with no residual members belonging to a 'pure' line. Smaller lineages, such as the *Laṇédarə* and *Kāřédarə*, have no recognized minimal lineages. In no case is there more than one level of segmentation below the level of maximal lineage; sub-lineages are not nested.<sup>1</sup> There is no terminological distinction in *Kamviri* between maximal and minimal lineages; both are branches (có:), and the members of both are tódbřo. In current *Kom* society the functions of minimal lineages as opposed to maximal lineages are not clear.

Corporate Functions of Lineages. All members of a maximal lineage are jurally obligated to give each other support against opponents from outside the lineage. If an outsider commits an act which would make him an opponent (uštéli) of an agnate, other agnates are supposed to mobilize themselves into a single group of supporters (é vari 'one team') to confront the opposition. Men may become opponents as a result of offensive acts such as adultery, assault, or murder, or as a result of political competition. Although mutual obligations of support technically extend between all agnates, the performance of such obligations diminishes as the genealogical distance between agnates increases, in accordance with the rules for determining closeness of relationship (see below). Thus in reality close agnates are expected to give active support to an offended person, while more distant agnates are safe from jural sanctions as long as they remain passive and do not side with the opponents. However, active support from distant agnates is expected if an outside threat cannot be met by a smaller group of close agnates, and it is possible for a conflict to escalate until it involves whole lineages in opposition. It is the fear of the ultimate confrontation in which all members of a lineage would fulfill their corporate obligations against all members of another lineage that motivates the *Kom*'s concern with keeping the peace.

In rare instances it is necessary for agnates to elect a spokesman (jěšt 'elder, leader') who is empowered to represent the maximal lineage as a corporate group. Such occasions occur when major problems

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(continued) informants, the chief being *Dūmú Sunmři Merək* of *Pabúštō*, *Kómbřom*; *Amírmot* of *Ůrbřom*, *Kómbřom*; *Gajěpšo* of *Ůrbřom*, *Kómbřom*; *Mahmadanifó* of *Agúru*; *Abdúlajon* of *Pítiřil*; and *Gajémáro* of *Uštrót*.

- 1) Sometimes persons who are *Garəgdarə*, *Cúgdarə*, *Baskyódarə*, *Bilěže:-darə*, *Arádarə*, or *Dūmúdarə* will refer to themselves as *Purugdarə*. However, the latter do not constitute a lineage, because all the descendants of *Púruk* do not call each other tódbřo. Most probably the *Púrugdarə* were a true lineage some eleven generations ago, before the emergence of the present-day lineages.

confronting the tribe as a whole cannot be solved through the normal institutional process of the community conference (gřamviri). Decision-making by lineages (patódbřō:) is a last resort, which accounts for the infrequency of such corporate action.

Thus maximal lineages emerge as corporate groups only on the basis of three criteria: (1) their membership is clearly bounded in that all and only the male members of a lineage call each other tódbřō, (2) all tódbřō have jurally sanctioned mutual obligations of support, (3) all tódbřō may on certain occasions be represented by a single spokesman.

Patrification. Kom lineages do not corporately own land or other property. Rather, ownership of property and rights to pasture are held by individuals as provided through inheritance. Joint ownership of grazing-grounds by close agnates may appear through successive patrification, in which rights to the same areas are passed from fathers to sons, but in no case do rights to grazing areas accrue solely on the basis of lineage membership.

Inheritance. A man has the right to pass on portions of his estate to anyone he wants, but it is customary for him to bequeath his property to his sons. The latter usually receive their portions (badé) when they reach maturity, so that the father divides up his holdings before he dies. If a man dies intestate, his property goes first to his sons; if he has no sons but has a living father, the property reverts to his father; if he has neither sons nor father, the property goes to his brothers; if there are no brothers, the property goes to the closest male agnate, where closeness is reckoned as described below. Two or more heirs equally close to the deceased claim equal shares, except that the eldest son usually gets an extra piece of real property, and the youngest son (by each mother in the case of plural marriage) inherits the house in which his mother resides. The numerous disputes arising from conflicting claims to an inheritance are settled by arbitration (lót karo:stə 'peacemaking').

Complementary Filiation. Balancing the ties of patrification which bind a person to his own lineage are ties of complementary filiation which bind a person to his mother's lineage (máldarə). Mother's brothers (sing. mám, collective plural máli, classificatory terms which extend to all male agnates of one's mother in her generation) are expected to give their sisters' children (sapsi) economic and moral support. Economic support for male sapsis is institutionalized in the pazúgo, a bequest of livestock, walnut trees, or other non-real property given by máms to sapsis. A man goes to his máli one by one to ask for a pazúgo in times of economic

need, usually when he is in the process of obtaining his first wife. The value of a pazúgo usually decreases as the genealogical distance between mám and šapsí increases, and distant máms often turn down their šapsí's request. Nevertheless, the fact that a man has the prerogative to ask a n y mám for a pazúgo is one indication that the ties of a man to his máldarə are viewed as corporate rather than individual. Reference to a person in sentences like aské gařégdarě: šapsí :zə 'He is a sister's son of the descendants of Gařék' also show the corporate nature of these ties.

Bilaterality. Superimposed on the ties of common lineage membership and complementary filiation are the ties of kinship which bind individuals to other individuals. From the Kom point of view, kinship (jatrəvor) exists between any pair of individuals who trace a relationship back to a common ancestor, regardless of the sex of that ancestor. By this criterion alone all Kom would have mutual obligations of kinship; therefore coupled with the requirement of a common ancestor is a rule of closeness or degree of relationship which limits the domain of jatrəvor to a cognatic kindred.

Degree of Relationship. The distance between two kinsmen is calculated as a number of generations that they must count back to their common ancestor. The distance is measured in 'steps' (pú), each step corresponding to one generation. If two kinsmen belong to different generations, the maximum number of generations determines the degree of relationship; for example A and A's brother's grandchild are three steps apart, because their common ancestor is one generation above A but three generations above the grandchild (Pl.1a).

On the basis of this system of measurement the Kom identify the following concentric cognatic kindreds: 1-2 steps distant: bajútu: jotr 'primary kin'; 3-4 steps distant: tú:rě jotr 'close kin'; 5-6 steps distant: pəruŋu jotr 'removed kin'; 7 or more steps distant: badrino jotr 'distant kin'. When precision is not required, these categories are often condensed; so that kinsmen 1-4 steps distant are called tú:rě jotr 'close kin', while kinsmen more than four steps distant are called badrino jotr 'distant kin' (Pl.1b).

Allocation of Support. Obligations of kinship extend throughout the domain of cognatic kin ties, but such obligations are jurally sanctioned only within the agnatic lineage. Thus in cases of conflict between two equally distant kinsmen, one being an agnate and the other not, a person is obliged to support his agnate. However, this does not mean that a person will always support his agnate; he may support a close non-agnatic kinsman (or even an affine) against an agnate if he feels that the subsequent jural sanctions against him are not

as important to him as the maintenance of good relations with the non-agnate. In cases uncomplicated by the jural obligations toward agnates, one generally expects active support from his close (tú:rě) kin, while he cannot rely on the active support of his distant (badríno) kin.

Affinality. Affinal ties bind a man to his father-in-law (cũř) and, to a lesser degree, to his wife's brother (zamí). The strength of this tie depends primarily on the son-in-law's willingness to perform various services for his father-in-law. It behooves the son-in-law to perform well, because his father-in-law is a primary source of economic support. Indeed, an amiable relationship between a man and his father-in-law often provides the former with the most important source of support that he has, especially if he lacks close agnates.

Adoption. Two unrelated persons of the same sex may establish a relationship of kinship (jatrėvor) through adoption. After two such persons undergo a ritual of gift-exchange and feasting, they incur the same mutual obligations of support as they would if they had a real consanguineal tie. Fulfilling such obligations would become difficult if one's adopted kinsman became involved in a dispute with one's close real kinsman, and it would appear that the rarity of intra-village (and perhaps intra-tribal) adoption arises from the necessity of avoiding potential conflicts of allegiance. However, adoption between men of different ethnic groups presents no potential conflicts of allegiance, and such adoption occurs more than occasionally.

Although fictive ties occur which represent all possible same-sex dyads of the nuclear family, the brother-brother dyad occurs most frequently as an adoptive tie. There is a lexical distinction in Kamviri between an adopted brother from another ethnic group, who is one's súli, and an adopted brother from one's own group, who is called simply břó 'brother' or, if more precision is needed, břó yaře břó 'a brother who was made a brother'. In the absence of affinal ties, bonds of súlivor 'adoptive brotherhood' are the only basis for mutual support possible between men of different ethnic groups.



A NOTE ON RANK, POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, AND GOVERNMENT  
AMONG THE PRE-ISLAMIC KOM

Richard F. Strand

In the course of my field research with the Kom Nuristanis I was able to re-examine some of the information on pre-Islamic social and political structure presented by Robertson in his classic The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush. My informants' accounts of pre-Islamic Kom society and my own observations of present-day Kom institutions corroborate much of what Robertson noted.<sup>1</sup> However, Robertson's lack of competence in Kamvíri, the language of the Kom, led him to perpetrate some serious distortions and omissions of the ethnographic data, and I would like to clarify his account by discussing two points: (1) the interrelationship of achieved rank and political leadership and (2) the formal governmental system of Kom communities.

Rank and Political Leadership. Before 1896 there were two categories of men who had achieved formal rank: the lé:moč 'warriors' and the múmoč 'holders of the mü rank'. Some múmoč had further achieved the rank of mer 'king'.

The Lé:moč. A man became a lé:moč by killing an enemy from another tribe. Upon returning from a raid, a man who could produce evidence of a kill (usually by presenting the victim's severed ear or nose) was honored in a special ceremony. Thenceforth he was entitled to a number of symbols and prerogatives, the exact nature of which was not agreed upon by my informants. Symbols of lé:moč rank included braids worn over one's ear and crest-feathers of the monal pheasant (vací:mol) worn in one's headdress. At feasts a lé:moč was given extra portions (sor or bađé) of food, and on raids a high-ranking lé:moč was allowed to carry extra quivers (štor). Informants did not profess accurate knowledge of the relation between the number of men killed and the number of these symbols and prerogatives to which a lé:moč was entitled. A lé:moč who had killed seven persons was known as a punđrímoč, but informants could not supply any other terms denoting warrior ranks analogous to the nomenclature given by M.Alam

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1) Information on the pre-Islamic Kom comes primarily from Dümú Sunmri Merek, Amírmo:t, and Gajépso, for whose interest in pre-Islamic Kom culture I am most grateful. I am also deeply indebted to Qazi Ghulam Ullah (Mólkon) and Gulmó:tkon, who assisted me throughout my stay in Nuristan.

Nuristani<sup>1</sup> for the Kalāṣa of Nišeygra:m. After his death a lé:moč was commemorated with a pole containing notches (avič), one notch for each person killed.<sup>2</sup>

The Múmoč. A man became a múmoč by giving feasts (kané or kanéyaš<sup>3</sup>) over a period of three years. In order to sustain the required level of feasting, a prospective múmoč must have had a minimum resource of 400 goats and sixty cows. Some feasts, called múzō: 'mü-dinner',<sup>4</sup> were given only for other múmoč, while other feasts, of varying ritual significance, were given for the community at large. A man who had successfully performed the necessary feasting attained a rank of mü and was entitled to a variety of symbols and prerogatives. A man could go through the series of feasts several times, each time attaining one more mü rank. In the Kom genealogy there is one man of the Bilēze:dare lineage named Pújmu Cármor -- Five-mü Cármor -- who had undergone the ritual five times.

The Jęst. Robertson<sup>5</sup> erroneously identified the múmoč as "Jast" (correctly jęst), but this latter term means 'leader'. A jęst's leadership (jęzvor) depends upon his ability to muster a body of supporters (varí) behind him. Kinsmen (especially agnates, who are jurally obligated to lend support) and neighbors are an important source of supporters, but a man must be clever and articulate enough to persuade others with whom he has no special ties to support him if he is to be politically successful. He must also have a reputation for generosity; even today, a man who does not maintain an acceptable standard of feastgiving (at funerals or weddings) is subject to censure, and censure resulting from stinginess is a major hindrance to acquiring supporters. In pre-Islamic times generosity was institutionalized in the mü rank, and it is doubtful that a valéme 'non-múmoč' could achieve a voice in political affairs, unless he was a lé:moč or a religious functionary. No doubt most of the jęsts whom Robertson knew were also múmoč, which would account for his failure to distinguish the two categories and their related functions.

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1) Nuristani 1969.

2) According to M. Alam Nuristani a similar pole (da:l), with holes instead of notches, was erected by a Kalāṣa man who had killed twelve men.

3) Robertson (p.460) erroneously used this term, which he writes as "Kaneash," to denote the aspirants to mü rank, but kanéyaš (literally 'feast-breakfast') denotes only the kind of feast in which animals were slaughtered in the afternoon and consumed the next morning (cf. Robertson, p.451). A 'feast-breakfast-giver' would be properly called a kanéyaš tele, but my informants denied that there was any special term to denote a mü aspirant.

4) Robertson's "Mezhom" (p.459ff.).

5) Robertson 1896, pp.449sq.

The Mer. It is questionable whether the rank Robertson<sup>1</sup> called "Mír" (correctly mer 'king') had the importance that he attached to it. One became a mer by giving a series of special feasts for the whole village, after which one was allowed to "sit" as king (hence the prerogative of sitting outside on a chair or stool). Robertson's observation that the "inner council" of political leaders were, with the exception of the utó,<sup>2</sup> all mers<sup>3</sup> hardly implies that "only a Mir can be a member of the Inner Council," as Jones concludes.<sup>4</sup> In fact there was no formally constituted "inner council"; there were only some jests who had more influence than others, and it was only fortuitous that those men whom Robertson identified as constituting the "inner council" also held the rank of mer. Mérvor 'kingship' entitled one to prestige, which added to his political capital, but there were apparently no political prerogatives attached to the rank, and the mers did not constitute a formal body of any sort.

Distinction between Rank and Leadership. It is important to distinguish between the formal ranks of lé:moč, múmoč, and mer and the informal position of jest. Political leadership was in the hands of the latter, whose position resulted from personal prestige combined with an ability to gather supporters. In pre-Islamic times personal prestige derived mainly from the holding of formal rank, and such rank was therefore an informal prerequisite to attaining the status of jest. Nowadays the rank system has completely disappeared, so that there is no longer a formal basis for prestige; but otherwise political leadership functions today in much the same way as it did in Robertson's time.

Formal Governmental Organization. In my earlier paper (this volume, pp.44-50 ) I have indicated the importance and function of kinship in Kom social organization. However, the organization of Kom tribesmen into agnatic lineages does not provide a formal basis for administering the day-to-day matters that require community action. Public works and public order are maintained through a formal system of government in which responsibility for particular civic activities is vested in three levels of governmental units: the primary village, the compound village, and the "team".

The Gřom. The Kamviri word gřom 'community' denotes a residential

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1) Robertson 1896, pp.472-73.

2) Robertson included the "Utah" (correctly utó), or ritual leader, in his "inner council". The utó at that time was not a mer, but his ascribed role apparently entitled him to some of the prerogatives accorded a mer.

3) Robertson 1896, p.434.

4) Jones 1967, p.36.

cluster of varying size, from a small hamlet to a city, but in a more restricted sense gřom denotes a politically autonomous community which I will call a "primary village". Each primary village has its own mosque, which in addition to its religious function serves as the central forum for community affairs. In eastern Nuristan larger villages are often really clusters of two or more primary villages; I will denote this type of community as a "compound village". Kómbřom is a compound village comprising four primary villages: Úrbřom, Úrbřom, Pabústõ, and Babérkřom.<sup>1</sup>

The Sazí. The entire male population of the Kom tribe is divided into groups of about fifty men each, called sazís 'teams'. Each sazí is conceptualized as a department of a primary village, unless the primary village contains fewer than fifty men, in which case residents from two primary villages combine to form one sazí.<sup>2</sup> In Kómbřom the communities of Úrbřom and Úrbřom have six sazís each, while Pabústõ has four sazís. Babérkřom, the village of the largely disenfranchised barí caste, occupies a special position in that it constitutes one of the six sazís of Úrbřom. In Kamvíri sazís, unlike gřoms, are not denoted by place-names.

Membership in a sazí depends on a combination of residence and patrification. From time to time sazí membership is fixed along residential lines (although factors of voluntary alliance may also to a lesser extent enter into the composition of a sazí), so that the members of each sazí are drawn from roughly contiguous houses in a primary village. From then on sazí membership is passed from father to son. A son retains his membership in his father's sazí regardless of where he may choose to live after he is no longer a member of his father's household. A man may even become otherwise fully integrated into the civic life of a new primary village, while retaining his obligations as a member of his natal sazí. Only upon

1) Primary villages which constitute a compound village usually are named by adding a directional prefix to the form -břom (a shortened form of ba + gřom, literally 'at-village'). The directional prefix indicates the direction of the named village from the speaker. Thus Úrbřom ('straight-up-village') is so named only if the speaker is in Úrbřom ('straight-down-village'), but if the speaker is in Pabústõ, Úrbřom becomes Põrérbřom ('up-on-an-angle-village') and Úrbřom becomes Nírbřom ('downwards-village'). Pabústõ is also called Čírbřom ('upwards-village') if the speaker is in Úrbřom and Pá:břom if the speaker is in Úrbřom. To avoid confusion I give the names of the primary villages of Kómbřom as if the speaker were in Úrbřom. Babérkřom literally means 'barí-village', and it adjoins Úrbřom.

2) For example, residents of the hamlets of Agúru and ĴamĴorm form one sazí, and the men of Binórm are combined with some of the men of Kamú to form one of the three sazís of Kamú.



the formal reorganization of a sazí, which requires the approval of all its members, may a man change his sazí affiliation. Sazís are formally reorganized when demographic processes produce an imbalance in their size, or when two men of different sazís agree to trade sazí affiliations. Such reorganizations tend to redistribute the composition of sazís along residential lines, in that men who trade affiliations or men who leave a larger sazí to join a smaller one are usually those with the fewest residential ties to their other sazí-mates.

Functions of Governmental Units. Each governmental unit has particular functions associated with it. It is the responsibility of the citizens (gřamí) of each primary village to make decisions regarding the establishment of laws (čor) affecting the residents of the primary village and to supervise the maintenance of those public constructions, such as the mosque and the primary irrigation channels (gřamú;), which pertain to the primary village. Decisions affecting the governing of the primary villages are made at community conferences (gřamvíri), usually held at the mosque, under the leadership of various local ješts.

At the level of the compound village decisions are made affecting the entire community, such as the regulation of agricultural and grazing activities and the formulation of policy toward the Afghan government and toward other tribes. Interested citizens from the entire compound village make such decisions in community conferences under the leadership of those ješts who have taken it upon themselves to preside over the particular issue.

The sazí is a decision-making body to the extent that its members must decide on the selection of some of their numbers to fill the roles of "magistrate" (uré), sentry (palé), military conscript (paltén), and sazí leader (sazímalək). Otherwise the sazí functions as a work-group which has a turn to maintain the local mosque and which must repair an assigned stretch of the federally-built road. The organization of Kom tribesmen into sazís serves the Afghan government as a convenient system for gathering head taxes, military conscripts, and road repairmen.

The Forerunner of the Sazí. The modern sazí system, with its sazímaləks and its integration into the Afghan system of administration, is a post-conquest invention,<sup>1</sup> but the sazí, as it functions in Kom internal government today, existed in pre-Islamic times under

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1) Informants stated that the Kom sazí is equivalent to the Afghan kandáy.

the name of gũř. Informants stated that gũř membership was residentially and patrilineally based, just as is sazí membership today. Under Afghan rule the gũřs were reorganized, and the change of name was undoubtedly connected with changes in the function of the institution. We do not know all the functions of the pre-Islamic gũř; one function was to act as a unit for the distribution of meat at the numerous public feasts,<sup>1</sup> and another was to provide a unit from which one uré was selected.

Recruitment of the Uré. The powers of the formally selected village magistrates to enforce certain laws of the primary or compound village were outlined by Robertson<sup>2</sup> in his description of the "Urir" (correctly uré), but he said nothing about the basis for their recruitment. Other investigators have speculated that the urés were formally elected representatives of each lineage<sup>3</sup>, but such speculation is unsupported by field research.<sup>4</sup> Under the current sazí system one man from each sazí is chosen annually by his sazímalək to be an uré. The sazímalək's choice must be unanimously approved by the members of the sazí; if not, the sazímalək chooses another man for approval.<sup>5</sup> My informants did not attest to the existence of any formal leader of the pre-Islamic gũř analogous to the modern sazímalək, and it is doubtful that the modern system of selection had an exact analogue in pre-Islamic times. However, my informants unequivocally asserted that in pre-conquest days one uré was chosen from each gũř, just as today,<sup>6</sup> so that the uré was clearly a representative of a residential unit rather than a descent group.

Residence and Descent in Kom Government. Among the Kom local government organized solely around descent groups would lead to an imbalance of power in which larger descent groups would dominate smaller ones. To avoid such a situation some aspects of social

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1) M.Alam Nuristani informs me that a cognate institution existed among the pre-Islamic Kalāṣa.

2) Robertson 1896, p.435sq.

3) Jones 1967, p.22.

4) Among the Kalāṣa of Nišeygrām an analogous institution of magistrates, called malavrē:, is recruited on the basis of lineage affiliation (M.Alam Nuristani, personal communication).

5) Because of internal discord and pressure from the local Afghan government, the institution of the uré is now defunct. At their most recent selection (1967) the Kómbrom urés were chosen from the village at large (brāṣēmī:) rather than from each sazí (passī:).

6) Robertson states that the urés were chosen by "the Jast and the people present" (p.437), and there is no evidence to support Jones's implication (1967, p.23) that the selection of the urés was solely up to the jests.

control were vested in the urés, who represented groups of equal size (the gürs), while other aspects of social control and the power to enact laws were vested in the entire citizenry (i.e., adult males) of a primary or compound village through the institution of the community conference. Community conferences and the selection of the urés were influenced by political leaders (jeŕŕs), whose descent groups formed the nuclei of their constituencies. Thus the total Kom political system was in a sense bicameral, with residence and descent complementing each other.

This system persists in a modified form today, the major change being that the institution of the uré has now virtually disappeared under pressure from the Afghan government. Those areas of social control which were formerly under the jurisdiction of the urés have largely broken down, and enforcement of remaining local laws is now carried out by vigilante groups led by various jeŕŕs. During the time of my fieldwork (1967-69) the sazí ceased to play a part in formal social control, so that total responsibility for formal social control now resides at the village level. I shall reserve a fuller discussion of the present system of Kom political leadership and government for a later publication.

# THE KAFIRS' RANKS AND THEIR SYMBOLS<sup>1</sup>

A. Raziq Palwal

Kafirologists are aware of the hierarchy or ranking system in Kafiristan, which is described by George Scott Robertson and Muhammad Abdullah alias Azar. This paper is based on the two mentioned sources and my own data from Wama and Bagramatal.

There are ranks achieved by homicides and feasts of merit and others attained only by lavish offerings. First I shall mention the ranks in Wama, secondly Bagramatal, and finally in Kamdesh.

## 1. Social Ranks in Wama.

1.1. Yali: For attaining this rank the man killed twenty goats and four oxen for the feast and served cheese, ghee, bread and wine to the people of his own village.

1.2. Malada: Beside his own tribe the man invites three other neighboring tribes. Each of the four tribes make its own symbolic flag. It is a cross to which a shirt is worn and a silver cup inverted on top of the vertical pole. Daily forty goats are given to the people of each flag for three days, or 120 goats for six meals. At the end each flag receives one ox as a gift.

1.3. Batur: When a man kills eight enemies and gives eight triumphal feasts, he becomes batur. In each feast he kills twenty goats and four oxen. The homicides and the feasts are scored on a post erected before his house.

1.4. Sulani: I have only the name of the fourth rank.

It is said that each of the ranks can be repeated once or several times.

## 2. The Social Hierarchy of the Katis.

2.1. Ara: This title means owner, master or rich man. Whenever a man owns four hundred goats he is given the title after feasting the villagers. The privileges and symbols of this rank are that the female members of his family are allowed to use baskets and shoulder strings woven out of goat hair rather than the ordinary plant fibres.

2.2. Leymach: After a warrior has killed an enemy and given a feast to the people then he is honored with a turban cloth which he wears

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1) The following is the summary of a paper published in the AFGHANISTAN journal, Vol.XXII,1, 1969, pp.14-27, and read at the Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference on 13th of November 1970, at Moesgård, Aarhus, Denmark.



around his neck. Besides, he wears a mal, the feathers of peacock or golden bird in his head-dress, as a symbol of the rank. His privileges are to take a greater share of the sacrificed animal's meat and to sit on chair out of house.

2.3. Aramuch: The man who is a candidate for this rank kills thirty goats once and distributes its meat raw. In winter he feasts his villagers once for seven days and again for five days in the Giche festival. After this the man is considered aramuch, his son arakur, and his daughter araji. According to Azar, the symbol of this rank is a chain; one end of this chain is fixed to the head and another end reaches the waist of the man. According to my informant, this chain-emblem, sturi, is worn around the waist by the araji as all Kalash girls do it too.

2.4. Paramach: The man who has achieved this rank wears the shtam shtargit, an emblem made of a long strip of thick woollen cloth which is decorated with embroidery and the designs of cowry shells. Another symbol of this rank is a thick round fillet which is also embroidered and cowry-shelled upon.

2.5. Shuramach: This rank is received exclusively by a warrior. As a symbol of this rank, the man wears a few bells around his waist and his wrist, or fixes it to his hand stick, and according to Azar around his neck. This emblem is called gengney kshtü.

2.6. Sunvnay-Ara: This rank is also achieved by homicides. The man becomes a candidate for this rank by announcing that he will commit homicides. His ears will be pierced and a narrow stick of some special wood, called brum, is placed in the holes of his ears. If he succeeds in fulfilling his wishes (in the course of a definite period?), the wooden piece in his ears is ceremonially replaced by a golden ring and the man becomes sunvnay-ara. In case of failure the wood remains in his ear and he is called brum-karo. Such a man is considered inferior, in spite of his richness. The symbolic privilege of sunvnay-ara is that he is allowed to wear, beside the golden ring, a sort of embroidered shoes with fringes of ibex-hair. The shoes are called kaj-vutsa and are put on for dancing.

2.7. Sunashista: The candidate of this rank kills thirty goats for the god of wealth at his temple, Bagisht-ta. Then for nine days he distributes uncooked meat among the families of his village. Again for nine days in the Autumn he serves food twice a day to all the villagers, male and female. Once again in the Giche festival, he feasts the villagers for nine days. With the completion of these rites he then wears three golden rings in the upper part of his ears which are pierced beforehand. Thenceforth he is entitled sunashista.

2.8. Mimach: A man who intends to attain this rank, goes to misa, a secluded place up in the mountain. There he stays thirty days during which time he is not allowed to come down. There he shaves his beard. For twenty days he feasts the ranked men of his village. During one month he kills daily thirty goats and distributes their raw meat among the villagers. Then he feasts all the people for seven days in Giche, and for five days in Ke. After all the required rites of mi one golden ring is put in his ear which makes him mimach.

2.9. Shtitsurinam: When eighteen mi feasts, as described above, are given to the villagers, then the man achieves the title of shtitsurinam. Some men have given 30 - 40 mis and one has given a complete round of twenty continuous mi feasts, which means that he has served food to all the villagers throughout the year.

Beside meat, there are also served bread, cheese, butter and fruits. This rank is not easy to be received by numerous people, but only by very few.

2.10. Majga: The man who presents one cow to every family of his village is entitled majga. With doing so he is praised even after death.

2.11. Maj-sa-maj-gum-ashali: Whenever a woman presents one skin-sack full of wheat to every warrior of her village in one time and the same amount in another time, she gets that title. As a privilege of this rank, she can sit down on chair outside of her house. Other people do not have this right of using chairs out-door.

2.12. Uta: All the kafiologists know that Uta is the priest. Besides, this priestly position is also a social rank. In fact, all the ranks are semi-religious. Because, all the homicides and the feasts are actually religious acts which are performed for the sake of worship and purity. The more a man has gone through such rites, the more he is apt to undertake religious functions. This is especially true in the case of uta. Although inheritance has a significant role in the matter, homicides and feasts of merit cannot be ruled out either. On holding the office of priesthood, uta immolates sixty goats to Disani. The privilege he acquires is that he is allowed to drive his flock three days later than the other people to the summer pastures and bring it down three days earlier. Others are fined for doing so.

2.13. Damana: This is a series of feasts which an uta has to perform when a son is born to him. As a first rite, he gives about forty-five kilos of wheat to every ura in office. In the second damana, one ox is killed at the Valatsa ceremony, when the child and its

mother come up from the seclusion house to the village after the lapse of twenty-one days. At the third damana feast, uta kills three oxen or goats instead. At the final damana feast, food is served for all men over twelve years of age. In addition to this a little more than three kilos of butter are presented to each warrior. The performance of these rites, I think, on the one hand, add to the prestige of uta, and on the other hand, sanction the future of the infant. However, damana is considered as a rank by my informant which is acquired by the distribution of some four kilos of wheat among all the warriors.

It is obvious that the information so far described is quite meager and fragmentary. We have learned about several names of ranks and of the rank-symbols, but very little or nothing about the ceremonies of their achievement. In order to complement this deficiency, I recommend on the one hand Robertson's elaborate account of the matter which is only for two ranks. On the other hand, I discern Robertson's data for the identification of other ranks almost equivalent to some of those described above.

### 3. Social Ranks among the Kam.

The following is a tentative analysis of Robertson's material in respect to the Kafirs' ranking system. He explicitly speaks of two ranks, the Jast and the Mir. The former is a general title which is given to every elder or senior person as Jisht-Ju, senior daughter or Ur-Jisht is senior Ura. Thus the title Jisht or Jast means only elder or chief, and it is not a rank in particular. Some of the proper ranks could be those of the following titles:

3.1. Leymach: It appears to me like Robertson has confused the term ley-mach with that of the ley-manchi. The latter means 'good man', which is an attribute opposite of diger-manchi, 'bad man'. Robertson himself writes: "He had a famous record of homicides, and was emphatically what the Káfirs describe as 'le manji' - that is, a good man. There was no single tribesman who would not say of Utah, 'le manjiz', 'He is a good man;...'<sup>1</sup> To my understanding, the first sentence of the remark signifies more ley-mach rather than ley-manchi. Obviously, a leymach could be a ley-manchi but not vice versa.

3.2. Sunajina: Robertson has properly pointed out this rank.<sup>2</sup> It seems to be the equivalent of sunashista or any of the ranks symbolized by golden rings.

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1) Robertson 1896, p.140.

2) Robertson 1896, p.460.



3.3. Mezhom: It is probably signifying the rites at Misa, which lead to the rank of mimach. At the Misa ceremonies ranked men and chiefs are feasted. Also Robertson says that at the Mezhom feasts tribal headmen or jast are entertained. He writes: "As the number of the Jast is limited, an array of seven male goats and one bull is sufficient for each day's entertainment."<sup>1</sup>

3.4. Mir: This Arabic term is politically used in the meaning of an autocrat in power in a small area or tribe who pays tribute either to another stronger mir or directly to the central government. Among the Kafirs the mir is not an autocrat but rather the prominent man of a certain group. There are four mir among the Kam people who form the parliament of this tribe.

The man who wants to become a mir has to be a jast at the first place and then give lavish feasts to the people at three annual festivals of Nilu. After fulfilling the conditions the person either man or woman can receive the title of mir.

Sanowkun might be also such a rank but there is no clue for its possible identification. Beside kaneash, the candidate(?) and sharau'te, the ranking symbol(?), there are other facts, pointed out by Robertson, which symbolize most probably different ranks. These symbols are the carrying of gun, spear, sword, shield, or bell attached to the hand stick, as well as the wearing of different dresses and/or ornaments. All these are different prestige symbols which everybody is not allowed to wear.



1) Robertson 1896, p.459.

2) Robertson 1896, pp.105, 185, 207, 282, 434, 439, 449-73, 523-25, 633, 627.



## NOTES ON KALASH FOLKLORE

Wazir Ali Shah

Introduction. In spite of considerable research by eminent historians and scholars and students of human sciences the origin of the Kalash tribe is so far shrouded in mystery, beyond the general statement that they are of the Aryan stock.

The Kalash themselves claim to have descended from the 16th and youngest son and daughter of Adam, who were married to each other and first settled in Tsiam. They believe that God had kept Bumburet and the two other Kalash valleys as His special preserve but gave it to their ancestors as they were otherwise not willing to marry each other. This belief is manifested by the occasional 'emigration' of Kalash women from the Kalash valleys as a protest against continuous rains.

It was generally believed by the locals as well as foreign historians and researchers that the Kalash were the aborigines of Chitral and that they descended from the Greek soldiers of Alexander who were left behind in these valleys during his march on Northern India through Eastern Afghanistan. Records relating to Alexander's campaign in the Hindu-Kush region, south of Chitral, speak of skirmishes with pagan tribes with customs and beliefs similar to those of the Kalash. But it may be borne in mind that the Kalash alone were not pagans at that time. The entire Afghanistan, particularly its eastern parts, were inhabited by pagan races and the Kho (and maybe several other) tribes of Chitral were also following a culture with customs and beliefs very similar to that of the Kalash and other pagan tribes.

A number of scholars including G.A.Grierson and Ghulam Murtaza<sup>1</sup> have suggested that the Kalash were inhabiting the area between lower Bashgal valley and Chaga Sarai (in Afghanistan) for about three centuries. In the 10th or 11th century A.D. they were pushed northwards into Chitral by the Bashgali Kafirs, who in their turn had been forced to leave their own valleys by other strange tribes from the West.

It is still a mystery as to from where the Kalash came to lower Bashgal, and 'Tsiam' from which the Kalash themselves claim to have come has not been historically located by anyone.

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1) Murtaza 1961.

Kalash in Chitral. According to Grierson and Ghulam Murtaza, and also supported by Morgenstierne, the Kalash tribes arrived in south Chitral valleys via Bashgal and Arandu and pushed the then resident Kho tribes (also pagan) further north. The area controlled by them extended up to Reshun (about 40 miles above Chitral), while it is not certainly known whether the Ojor valley and the Lotkuh valley were also subjugated by the Kalash. The famous 'Luli' song of the Kalash however mentions celebration of the Joshi festival in the Lotkuh valley from Shoghor to Gobor and even across the border into Badakhshan but does not mention Ojor or Arkari. No detailed historical date, legendary or otherwise, however exists about the Kalash rule in the lower Chitral beyond the fact that Kalash rulers lived at Balahisar at the southern tip of present Chitral town, and the chief bridge over the Chitral river near the present Qila was built by the Kalash rulers.

Reference to Kalash rulers at Chitral proper is available only in respect of the last one, named Bulesing, who is said to have been defeated and ousted from Chitral proper by the Rais invaders in 1320 A.D.

Further south, in the Kalash dominated areas of Drosh, Biori, Urtsun, Swir, Birir, Bumburet and Rumbur too, no legends or stories are available regarding the Kalash rulers except for the last one, named Raja Wai of Bumburet, who was also defeated and subjugated along with his people a few years after the fall of Bulesing.

It may be mentioned here that until the Islamization of the Kho tribes in Northern Chitral, both the Kalash and Kho tribes seem to have had local headmen known as "Asakals" (Turki: aqsaqal), who acted as local chiefs, and there were no central authorities as kings, neither among Kalash nor Khos. The only known pagan chiefs among Khos are Bahman and Su-Malik. Bahman is known for his war against the Arab invaders, but the only fame attributed to Su-Malik is the grandeur of his feast to the people arranged by him in anticipation of his death.

It would therefore be safe to assure that no Kalash kingdom existed in the area dominated by them. There were only local chiefs or Asakals in the big villages like Chitral, Bumburet, Shishikuh etc.

The brief domination of Lower Chitral by the Kalash however came to an end in the early part of the 14th century and the Khos, now converted to Islam, steadily penetrated southwards during the Rais period. In the course of hundred and fifty years the entire area in the main valleys and large parts of the side valley of Shishikuh were converted to Islam.

By the end of the 19th century the only secluded valleys where the Kalash remained in their pagan condition were Birir, Bumburet and Rumbur. These valleys and the people thereof were set aside as personal preserve and property of the Mehtars who protected the Kalash against jealous mullahs and landgreedy nobles to the present day. They were however required, in return for this protection, to pay certain special taxes as jizya and perform certain labour work, particularly as household servants bringing fuel etc.

With the advent of Pakistan, the Kalash have been freed from the special taxes and forced labour and are treated in the same way as the Muslim inhabitants and the only tax they pay is ushar, i.e., one tenth of land products which is payable by all subjects of the state.

I. Religion and Beliefs. The Kalash religion is a mixture of idolatry and ancestor worship. They also believe in fairies and try to appease them by sacrifices. Their idolatry is however of a different kind than that of Hindus and Buddhists. Whereas among the Hindus the incarnations of God, like Rama, Krishna, Vishnu etc. are worshipped and idols resembling these incarnations are made and preserved, the Kalash do not have any such idols which are believed to resemble in form any of the deities they consider sacred. Instead usually special shrines are set up at places, and wooden horse-heads are fixed on either side of the sacrifice place. These shrines are similar in shape for all the various gods and deities such as Mahandev, Sajjigor etc.

They believe in a supreme God which they call by the name of Dezau, i.e., the Creator. He is believed to be Creator of the Universe and protector of life and property. Incidentally there is no shrine for Dezau, and the animal offering is made at open spaces.

Below Dezau are the other deities who are supposed to be advisers or ministers of the Creator. Sacrifice places, shrines, are set up for them in various places with wooden horse-heads fixed on either side of a small walled structure. Here they offer sacrifices of sheep, food, milk products and dry fruit at different occasions and pray to the deity for protection against diseases, flood, rains and for protection of cattle and crops.

The more important deities are Sajjigor (in Rumbur), Mahandev and Ingao (in Bumburet), Warin and Praba (in Birir), and Balumain who belongs to Bashgal but comes to the Kalash valleys once a year.

The Kalash believe in life after death and place charity above all as the means of entering paradise.

Though the Kalash give considerable importance to showing consideration and respect to the souls of their ancestors and try to glorify the dead by giving feasts at their death and raising wooden effigies in their memory and also by giving food to people as well as sacrifices to gods on their behalf, and even keeping food in or near their coffins, there are no definite instances of their worshipping the effigies of these ancestors or asking for their aid in worldly matters. All their efforts are directed towards 'settling the uneasy souls of the ancestors' by charity on their behalf.

II. Customs. The Kalash according to themselves have no particular religion of their own. Their religion is the dastur, i.e., customs which they follow. Any infringement of this dastur is considered negation of the religion and thus they continue to cling to their dastur. The dastur or customs vary somewhat from valley to valley and from village to village but the principles are essentially the same.

Thus the ceremonial dances on festivals, the marriage rites, ceremonies on birth, reaching of puberty, the ceremonies on death, the bashaleni system, the sacrifices and offerings on various occasions like seasonal festivals, ploughing, seeding, threshing, collection of grapes, making of wine, and other similar customs are at the same time the dastur and religious faith of the Kalash.

It is therefore evident that right from the birth of a Kalash to his death he has to live in a particular way, dress in a particular manner and perform certain functions. Failure to do so takes him out of Kalash fold. One simple example would be that if the Kalash woman only give up the traditional head-dress (kopesi) she leaves the Kalash fold. Similarly if she ceases going to the bashaleni during monthly course or for child-birth she is no longer a Kalash.

A lot has already been said and written about the Kalash customs and it would be repetition to mention these here again. Among the beliefs of the Kalash some interesting items may however be mentioned:

1. The Moon. Black spots on the moon are believed to be goats. It is said that once the moon came to land on the earth and some shepherds with goats and dogs went over it. While they were there the moon rose up toward the sky and thus they are still there and can be seen when the moon is full.

2. Eclipse. It is believed that eclipse of moon occurs when it is attacked by a tiger (sher) who is a brother of the moon. The moon is said to have taken possession of sher's property as a result of which there is constant friction between them. The eclipse of the sun is believed to forecast about the death of a notable person.



3. Rainbow. The rainbow is believed to be the shadow of a one-eyed giant. The shadow becomes visible when he leaves one spring (he lives by springs in the high hills) to go to another one.

The house which is encircled by a rainbow is feared to face a calamity and the owner hastens to make sacrifice of a goat to avert the danger.

4. The Milky Way. This is believed to have been created by dust raised due to a race contested by the horse and the cow. The cow is said to have cursed the horse as a result of which it cannot do jugali, i.e., ruminant like cow or camel. The horse also cursed the cow and therefore the feet of the cow were split in two.

5. Thunder (dera-lang). Thunder occurs when the fairies play polo and other horse games among themselves in the sky. When they strike each other with lances, they create lightning.

6. Earthquakes. Earthquakes occur when the flies scratch the back of the ear of a bull on whose two horns the world is placed.

The Kalash throw some oshniru wheat flour (kept aside for sacrifices) into the fire immediately after occurrence of earthquake. This sacrifice is known as thumanda.

7. The Land. It is considered pure (oshniru) and sacrifices are offered for its fertility.

8. Stars. Two small bright stars are known as Laila and Majnun, a pair of lovers.

9. Lakes. The lake on top of Durike-An (Duriko-Chhat) is considered to be the abode of sacred deities and fairies. People approaching it are warned of their reception by the fact that those favoured find it calm and peaceful. But those in disfavour find it rough and they see a red bed in the middle with fairies or spirits on it. Such person may face some misfortune or may die on the spot.

10. Weather. Bad weather is caused when maloshes (deities' shrines) and other oshniru places are approached by unpure things like women, eggs, hens, etc. Occurrences are detected by the dehars, who sometimes in a state of trance advise offerings and sacrifices for purification of those places.

11. Aerolites/Meteors. These are believed to be istorio-rich (stools of the stars).

12. Ingao. He is one of the advisers of Dezau but does not like beating of drums. His shrine is at Batrik where dance is done at Chitirmas. No drums are beaten as it is feared that if drums are beaten Ingao will flee away.

13. Cattle Epidemic. Cattle epidemic is attributed to approach of men and women guilty of adultery to the sacred places and cattle

- houses. The dehar goes into trance and points out the culprits. The culpable woman is required to touch a kid, which is then killed and burnt, and its ashes thrown away. The epidemic is thus controlled.
14. Small Pox. In case of emergency of small pox in the house, ishperi with milk is immediately offered, and bread and butter distributed among the elders. This is to welcome Small Pox so that it is mild and not fatal. At the end of a week, another ishperi as a farewell to it is offered.
15. Barrenness. The cure for barrenness among the Kalash is killing and skinning a goat and putting the woman inside the skin while it is hot. More she-goats or sheep are killed to continue the process. The women are also taken to the hot springs in Lotkuh.
16. The Soul. The soul leaves the body and walks around while the man is asleep. Whatever the soul experiences the man sees it in his dream. The soul of a dead one usually wanders in the same places where the person, when alive, used to go about.
- In case of violent death by murder, wild animals, child-birth, the soul usually remains at the same spot where death occurred.
17. Fairies and Spirits. The fairies and spirits usually stay in remote areas far from human habitations. In case a person approaches such an area and by error (unknowingly) stumbles against them or tramples their children they get angry and harm the person.
- Evil spirits do not actually enter a person's body. Actually the spirit is outside, but influences (hypnotizes?) the person so that he acts and talks in the way desired and directed by the spirit.
- The fairies, spirits etc. usually collect at some specified places at noon (greuish) and it is at this time of day that people walking in remote areas come into contact with them and are harmed.
18. Violent Death. People murdered or killed by wild animals are shahid. A woman dying in child-birth is also a shahid (martyr) and she is buried in a separate graveyard.
- The death of a woman during menses is considered a special disaster.
19. Evil Eye. Some people are known, by experience, to have the 'evil eye' and if they admiringly stare at a child or cattle illness or other misfortune befalls them. The dehar discovers it by going into trance and advises remedy. The remedy consists of smoke from a burnt portion of the evil-eyed man's ponoku (rags round his feet). The earth under the feet of the evil-eyed is also obtained and thrown over the victim.
20. Protection against Evil Spirits. Iron is considered a good protection against evil spirits. A small piece is therefore in-

variably attached to the amulet made of threads tied round the neck of the affected person.

21. Chamakh Bohtu (white stone which creates light when struck) is also considered very useful to ward off evil spirits.

It is believed that when somebody sees an evil spirit he should strike it with the chamakh bohtu once only. The spirit will say: "Strike me once more!" but he should be answered: "My mother gave me one breast only at my birth. So I strike only once." The evil spirit will then die. But if it is struck twice, the spirit will become alive again and harm the person.

22. The amulets or charms against diseases etc. are made up of a number of threads joined together. The important part of them is the knot or knots at short spaces. These knots are tied by the amulet-maker for protection against evil spirits or particular diseases, and each knot requires a special izum.

The izum is acquired by the wise man in this manner: While asleep he sees two animals or insects (or snakes etc.) talking to each other. On waking up he remembers the talk and uttering it to himself he repeats it with his face and eyes towards the hearth (not seeing nor talking with other people), and makes up his mind to use this izum against any particular ailment he may like. Thereafter he can use the izum against that particular ailment whenever required and utters these words under his breath while tying the knot.

23. Mourning. When death occurs in a family the relatives do not shave - do not wear new or clean clothes - do not dance - women do not use the small cap under the kopesi - do not do make-up nor use antimony. The mourning period ends at the next festival following the death of the person.

24. Snakes. The chief remedy for snake bite is the charm and amulet with the particular izum for snakes. Also blood-letting is a usual remedy. A kid is killed and its bowels are placed over the bitten part of the person.

The snake runs to water immediately after a bite. If the victim reaches the water first the snake dies.

A snake living in a house for very long protects the family members against outsider snakes which may attack them.

25. Animals. Horse was created first of all animals and was used by Balumain for riding.

The cat is a friend of man. It once severed the head of a snake which had entered the bosom of man for protection against fire and then tried to bite him. They went to the cat for adjudication. The cat pretended deafness, asked the snake to come out and speak loudly

and when it did so cut its head off.

The eagle (brizbar) is considered sacred and not killed. It is believed to have scratched markhor drawings on a sacred rock near a malosh (in Rumbur).

26. Farming. A month before ploughing bulls or oxen are collected at a place where most ploughing is done. Milk is sprinkled on the oxen as well as plorp, and prayers chanting 'warash Kari' ('make the bulls strong as hawks') is done.

At seeding time a person known for being of good omen makes a sacrifice of a goat at the shrine of Mahandev, sprinkles blood on the seed, his own and others, before seeding is done. Offerings are also made at the fields by farmers individually. At reaping and threshing too, offerings are made and the first five seers of grain are kept aside for sacrifice purposes.

When a kash (granary) is opened, the first few seers known as osion are purified at malosh and then eaten by the family and not given to outsiders.

27. Cattle Protection. The protection of cattle for winter period up to Chitirmas is that of Sorizan and from Chitirmas to Pul (autumn) is the responsibility of Goshidai. Offering is made to Goshidai at Joshi, and to Sorizan at Chitirmas.

28. Secret Song. The song sung at the time of chan lengeik dance ('leaves moving') at Joshi is a fairy dance and the text is secret. It is known only to one person in the village and he transfers it to one of his sons when his time comes. It is believed that when this song and dance is on, the fairies also come and join the dancers. Usually on this occasion a young oshniru boy goes to the roof-top of a nearby house and sprinkles milk into the air as if to welcome the fairies.

29. Girls' Puberty. When a girl goes to bashaleni for the first time, her family or friends take ishperi (milk and fruit) to her.

In general it is due to the above mentioned reason, that the Kalash have managed to uphold their age-old customs on birth, marriage, death and all other aspects of life on earth in spite of increasing Muslim influence from all sides. If the customs had not a religious basis they would have modified them long ago to conform with the customs prevailing among their Muslim neighbours.

III. Festivals. Chief Kalash festivals are Chilimjusht or Joshi, Utchal, Pul and Chitirmas besides some minor festivals of lesser importance.

Chilimjusht is celebrated for three days in mid-May and Chitirmas in mid-December. Both are common to all the three valleys. Utchal is popular in Bumburet and Rumbur while Pul is a special festival of



Birir. Enough has already been investigated and recorded regarding these festivals and in certain cases the festivals have been covered with recordings and filming.

It may be mentioned that the dances and songs which are part of the festivities have had important religious or dastur basis in the past. In the course of time the Kalash have lost the real spirit of the particular dances, and in respect of some of the so-called 'sacred' ones it is only the tune which is sung while the actual text, the knowledge of which came down from a particular person to his descendants, generation to generation, have been forgotten. However the 'elders' still pretend to know it (and as they have to say it under their breath they can continue to pretend without fear of detection), while the tune is chanted by all.

These festivals are also the only means by which the Kalash continue to hear and talk of their ancestors and their past. As such they are the soul and life blood of Kalash culture, dastur, or religion, whatever one may like to call it.

IV. Costumes. As stated above the costume used by Kalash men and women is a part of their dastur or religion. The menfolk have undergone considerable change in their dress and one cannot distinguish a Kalash from a Kho. But the main emphasis is naturally laid on the dress of the Kalash woman. The long black gown with the belt in the waist (and of course with a small bell suspended behind) and the head-dress with cowrie shells and other buttons studded thereon and the colourful feathers are essential if at all the woman is a Kalash.

V. Verbal Arts. The Kalash world abounds with verbal arts such as myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, sayings and poetry. It would however require a lifelong research work to make a useful collection and a pre-requisite to it would be a mastery of the language. I have however only a small collection of some Kalash mythology and legends which are mentioned below:

#### Myths

1. Sajjigor. The Rumbur deity Sajjigor originally lived in Bashgal. During one of Kalash Chief Raja Wai's raids into Bashgal, he made it known through the traditional betan (dehar) that, as Bashgal was soon to become Islamistan, Raja Wai should take him to Kalashgum and set up his shrine (nishani) to that valley. Raja Wai was provided with a bow with two arrows, one tied with a red string and the other with a black string. He was directed to throw the arrows and set up the shrine at the spot where the red threaded arrow fell and to set up bashaleni where the black threaded arrow fell. Raja Wai did accordingly and after long search by his men the spots were detected in

Rumbur and the shrine and the bashaleni were set up near the small saplings where the red and black arrows were found stuck. These saplings have now grown into giant fir-trees and it is forbidden to touch them with axe.

Sajjigor is also said to have foretold Raja Wai about the extinction of his family due to the sin of adultery committed by him with his own daughter.

2. Mahandev. Mahandev is considered somewhat lower in status than Sajjigor. It is said that both Mahandev and Balumain roamed the Bashgal and Kalashgum valleys and had no specific areas allotted to them. Mahandev who was cleverer than Balumain coveted the Bumburet valley. He once betted with Balumain that they would go for hunting and sleep on the mountain. On getting up in the morning whosoever face was towards Bashgal should go there permanently and whosoever face was towards Kalashgum should live there. In the morning Mahandev awoke early to find his face towards Bashgal while the face of Balumain, who was still asleep, was turned towards Kalashgum. But he managed to move Balumain's face towards Bashgal without waking him. When he got up he was facing towards Bashgal and had therefore to go and live there permanently.

The dehar who disclosed to the people about Mahandev's permanent stay in Bumburet, advised a wooden horse-head be affixed at a place near Gromun and a small stone also placed there. If Mahandev agreed to the spot the small stone would be replaced by a large one. In the next morning the small stone was found nearly a mile away and in its place a large stone was seen lying at the same spot. Both these stones are still visible.

3. Balumain. As stated above Balumain, an adviser of God, is living in Bashgal after having lost the bet with Mahandev. He however comes to Kalashgum once a year. He comes on horseback. It is believed that once dogs barked at his horse near Kandisar village when he was coming for Chitirmas festival. He hit the dogs with the whip with the result that there was lightning which burnt part of the village.

#### Legends

The majority of legends revolve round Raja Wai, the last independent chief of the Kalash who lived at Batrik in Bumburet.

Raja Wai once went for hunting and returned late at night. He entered his house over the side wall and incidentally came into a portion of the room where his young daughter was asleep. He is said to have lost control of his senses on seeing his young beautiful daughter and slept with her. In the morning he felt repentant and took an ox to the shrine of Mahandev for sacrifice to clear his sin.

Mahandev is said to have rejected the sacrifice by turning away his head (i.e., the wooden horse-head). Incidentally Raja Wai knew of Mahandev's own love affair with his cousin and mentioned this through the dehar. Mahandev is said to have relented and accepted the sacrifice. It was therefore allowed from that time that if a Kalash married his ninth cousin, he should purify himself by offering a bull or an ox to Mahandev.

Raja Wai thereafter ordered that no man should sleep with his wife nor any girl be given in marriage in his kingdom. This law remained for three years and was removed only when his daughter and other women went before him and remonstrated. He then ordered the removal of the law and ordered all should go to bed with their wives in the same night. As a result of it 180 boys and as many girls were born nine months after this. The boys were particularly strong and healthy and they grew up soon to be stalwarts. When this group became fifteen years old Raja Wai took them along with others to invade Bashgal and subdue the rebels. He captured many rebel villages and brought back loot and prisoners. The girl prisoners from Bashgal were made to dance naked which act was disapproved by God and the dehar told him that his doom was near. Accordingly soon after this most of his family members died. There was none in his family to succeed him, and the Rais soon subjugated the Kalash in Bumburet etc.

Bulesing was Kalash Chief at Chitral proper and was defeated and driven away by the Rais. He and his brother Khavizogh and their kin fled to Ayun and settled at Arkhal near Saban. After some time they led an expedition to invade Bumburet and snatch it from Raja Wai. During the night the party left for Bumburet but as it was pitched dark, after walking through Ghochharkuh for a long time, they reached back Ayun and thinking it to be Bumburet carried out a massacre killing their own kinsmen, women and children. In the morning they found out the error, and on the advice of the dehar, went to Bumburet where Raja Wai forgave them and gave them some lands at Brun. Khavizogh however stayed on in Ayun till his death. Bulesing lived at Brun for some time in peace but again rebelled against Raja Wai. He incurred the chief's displeasure by skinning alive one of his cows. Raja Wai got help from the Rais of Chitral and attacking Brun massacred the entire family and kin of Bulesing. Only one person who had gone to Birir escaped.

#### Folk Tales

There are a number of folk tales, about wars, fairies, brave acts and romances. The famous romance is that of a young man who fell in love with his sister-in-law (younger sister of his wife). The story

remains alive in the classic song known as 'Daginai' sung at Chilim-jusht.

Another story is about seven persons (three women and four men) from Brun who escaped a massacre of their tribe by a certain Udalak, a descendant of Raja Wai. The seven persons hid in a cave near Birir-Nisar for some time during the course of which the girls became pregnant though they were near relatives. A giant came there and throwing the single innocent boy out, closed the cave with the six culprits shut therein. The spot is known for abundance of honey-bees which collect there in large numbers.

Another folk tale is about a blind old woman of Majam in Bashgal and her young nephew. She is said to have made regular sacrifices to Praba while the others ignored it and even disrespected the god by killing a dog at his shrine. The result was that flood washed away the entire locality and the old woman and her nephew were the only survivors. The boy was favoured with supernatural powers with the aid of which he killed a giant in Birir and took most of the lands there. His descendants hold the lower parts of Birir.

Other stories are also current about this boy, whose name is Bangulai. It is said that his goats, which were many, moved in the sphere from one pasture to another. Once he passed by his sister without noticing her. She cursed his cattle, as a result of which all the goats turned into stones which are seen even now in upper Birir.

Bangulai is also known to have been favoured by the god with 600 markhors born from his own goats following mixing of wild markhors with his she-goats. These markhors he gave away for sacrifice to the gods and gave a feast to the village. People of one village demanded their share of feast in form of living markhors which were handed to them. This however displeased the god and the markhors ran away to the hills. The descendants of Bangulai are respected for being the tribe which sacrificed markhors to God and are known as 'Sharakat Nawai'. Tingel of Bumburet is present elder of this tribe.

Shurala, a nephew of Bangulai, is also attributed with supernatural powers. Markhors mixed with his she-goats and so he got markhor kids. He is also said to have been provided with food, wine and walnuts by a white-headed old man, throughout the winter in his yommshali and on return home in spring found out that his own stocks at home were finished. His wife told him a white-headed servant employed by him had taken away their rations every evening for his - Shurala's - consumption.



## KALASH MYTHOLOGY

Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk

1. For the origin of Kalash see "The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush" by Robertson and "Kafirs and Glaciers" by Schomberg. The Creator is called Tezaw or Khodei.<sup>1</sup>
2. There are many angels who perform different duties.
3. Baro Mine is the largest of the Malush or Dow (Malush means the Great and is also used for 'sacrificial altar'). He lives in Siam. He comes only once a year during Chitrimas celebrations in winter from December to January lasting 40 days. The Kalash confine themselves inside their homes and lead a sort of hibernating life. For this period they store their provisions and firewood, etc., so that they don't have to go outdoors for anything. Being the eldest of the Dows he is able to help in all kinds of ways: in matters of health, wealth, happiness and arable crops. Goats, rams and small animals are sacrificed at his Malotsh. Whenever he comes he rides a horse and those angels who accompany him also ride horses of different colours.
4. Maha Dew (The Mighty Dew - Dew and Dow is synonymous and refers to a giant or a cruel spirit). He is also a senior Dew (maha means 'big' in Sanskrit). His Malotsh is always in attendance. Every day one could approach him by offering the sacrifice of a bullock or a goat. In autumn when many goats are slaughtered in his Malosh, Moslems - even people in the village of Ayun (neighbouring Muslim village) - receive shares of the sacrificial meat. Maha Dew is petitioned for all needs. A Betan is invoked who can prophecy. He is said to have access to God and can petition Him on behalf of the people.
5. Ingaw is a Dew who is entrusted for good crops. The people offer the sacrifice of one coloured animal before the seeds are sown. Betan will prophecy at his Malotsh about the crops.
6. Kotshomai: She is the goddess entreated by men on behalf of women. Children are requested from her. Her sacrifice is a she-goat.

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1) For identification or at least better rendering of the names cf. Schomberg 1938, Morgenstierne 1947, 1953, and Siiger 1956.

7. Zaz: He is the Malotsh for breeding goats. The sacrifice for him is offered while leaving for the summer pastures and on return to the valleys in the autumn. It is said that once a man had lost his ram and while searching for the goat the man found him on the hillside led by a shadow. The shepherd did not see the actual person but followed the shadow to Veran village. There the shepherd came into a large room where all the Dews were sitting. When he named his ram, Saradanz, the gods did not return it to him but gave him a stone to be placed in a Malotsh and told him to entreat the stone if any goat was lost. Anyone who offers sacrifice in that Malotsh will find his goats. The name of the shepherd was Masen.
8. Shigan: When the children of a daughter of the village are ill, then the Betan will offer a sacrifice to Shigan.
9. Istogosh Dew: When small children wear clothes for the first time, a goat is sacrificed. The blood of the goat is allowed to flow over the child's forehead. After this act of 'baptism' he is recognized as a Kafir.
10. Prabaro is a Malotsh in Birir where the Kafirs go at Chitrimas.
11. Grimor was a wise man named Bagorai. Once his goats went astray and when the goats did not return his daughter went in search of them. Finally she found the goats in a place called Away. But her father was not with his goats. The shepherd told the girl that her father had concealed himself in the ear of a greenish goat. She was annoyed and began to curse, and on account of this Bagorai turned into stone. He declared that anyone who lost his goats should make an offering to him addressing him as Grimor. His shepherd's name was Kasawer and he has another Malotsh where offerings are made.
12. Warin: Once there lived an old lady in Bashgal (the land of Red Kafirs now converted to Islam), who had an only nephew. The inhabitants of that village were very wicked. The nephew's name was Ratharie and the name of his aunt was Sondi. The people of the village were sacrificing dogs and cats instead of goats. The old lady asked her nephew to borrow a small goat and make the sacrifice, and to plaster the Malotsh with leaven flour dipped in the blood of the sacrificed animal. Then Warin appeared in the form of a man and was well pleased with the nephew and told him that on that night a severe earthquake and storm would hit the village and that he should not come outside. When these events occurred, the boy and his aunt did not leave their house. On the next day they found that the whole village had been destroyed. So they left the village and while they were crossing a pass Warin again appeared before them. He gave them three arrows: one arrow was tied with red thread, the other with

black thread and the third with white thread. They were told that where the white arrow hits the ground a village should be built, where the black hits the ground a Batshaleni (wooden house for segregation of women who are menstruating or who have just given birth to a child), and where the red arrow strikes the ground a Malotsh should be erected. By this time the aunt was feeling thirsty and asked for water. When Warin poured out the water it became golden sand. With this golden sand the nephew bought all the land in Birir valley (the smaller of the Kafir valleys in Chitral still inhabited by Black Kafirs). The aunt was given a ring; when she looked through the ring she could see Warin who gave directions for sacrifices. Even to this day the ring is used. The nephew was given a bow. So today when Mathsokaik (taking omens) is performed, the men use the bow and the women use the ring. When the bow shakes, the answer is 'yes', otherwise it is 'no'.

Some Other Beliefs. When Adam was created by God, a woman was created from his left leg. In those days only vegetable foods were eaten, so men were not distinguished from women. An angel brought two small pieces of bread, one piece for the man and one for the woman. When they had eaten the pieces of bread the man recognized the woman and the woman recognized the man. They begot seven sons and seven daughters who were born in seven pairs, there being a son and a daughter in each pair of twins. The fourteen brothers and sisters married each other although they did not marry their own twins. Three of the sons abducted the wives of their brothers. The children of these three sons became Kafirs, while the children of their four brothers became Believers. So the story of abduction comes down to this day among the Kafirs.

2. Formerly the Believers built Batshaleni houses for their women-folk where they were segregated during menstruation and for 40 days after giving birth to a child. After seeing these houses the Kafirs adopted the custom too. Later on the Believers gave up the custom.

3. Kafirs believe in Hell and Paradise. Any person who does a good deed will go to Behesht (Paradise) after death, while the wicked will be burnt in Hell (Duzath).

## DIZILA WAT!

Peter Snoy

On the 6th day of the Kalash Winter Festival, which in 1955 lasted from the 9th to the 23rd of December, the Kalash of Bumboret/Chitral make 'sooth-drawings' in their ceremonial houses. The main motives are wild and domesticated goats but other domesticated animals, for example cows and dogs occur also. Wild animals, which are dangerous for the domesticated ones and for human beings are portrayed as well.

The reason for this custom, the Kalash informants said, was that they make these drawings in memory of a happening in the past. In 'very olden times' human beings - Kalash -, animals, fairies, and deities lived together. Then some incident occurred which resulted in a separation of these beings. Three versions of this incident are told: 1) The human beings left from their own free will. 2) Other Kalash came and drove the Kalash, who were already there, away. 3) The fairies drove these human beings away.

Anyway, the result of this incident was, that animals and human beings became separated from the fairies and deities and turned into rock pictures and stone statues in a place far away in the mountains. In order to keep this happening alive in the minds of the people the Kalash make yearly sooth-drawings, but they also consider these sooth-drawings useful for the increase of animals.

The ceremony of the following night (from the 6th to the 7th day) is also concerned with this happening. They form figures out of dough of animals and human beings, which are baked in an open fire. This is done in all houses by all people. There is singing and laughing, but whistling and shouting are forbidden, in order not to drive away the spirits of the ancestors which are expected to come to the villages during the Winter Festival. The ritually clean boys make a rather big male goat out of baked dough in the stable and bring it to the ceremonial house where it is put on the board of the rear wall together with all the other animal figures. As soon as the first signs of morning are observed the boys start to shoot at the big male goat figure with small bows and arrows. At the moment the figure is hit and smashed all the boys start shouting, rush out from the house into the village lane knocking at all doors and run up the valley for some distance beyond the



village boundary. They are driving away the wild animals, they informed us.-

In autumn 1970, when A.R.Palwal and I visited the Kalash, we asked whether it was possible to go to that place where in those older times animal and men had turned into rock pictures. Only a few of the villagers said that they had seen this place. Sumal Beg from Krakal finally agreed to show us the place. We went up the valley of Bumboret to the place where several side valleys come together to form the valley of Bumboret. There we turned south into the valley of Otok. The summer pastures of this valley are nowadays used by Kho-people from Ayun. Formerly the pastures belonged to the Kalash. About 8 km inside this valley on the steep barren eastern slopes there is a wall of rocks, partly broken down. This place is called Dizila-wat, which means 'stone of creativeness'. In the debris at the foot of this rock there are stables and shepherds' huts, and quite near to them on a few large boulders there are rock-engravings. The pictures are not very deeply chiseled and are of different age what can be seen from the weathering. Mostly wild goats are depicted with ornamentally drawn horns (just in the same ways as the Kalash apply it for their sooth-drawings). Human beings are depicted also, two of which were relatively large.

Sumal Beg who could not find these boulders immediately, said spontaneously after discovering them: 'Balumain has made it'. He also mentioned that on the wall of rocks there were more pictures because those boulders we saw had fallen down. We climbed these rocks but we were unable to discover any more pictures.

When we talked about the folkloristic background of these pictures Sumal Beg told us that Balumain, one of the highest deities of the Kalash who visits their valleys during the Winter Festival takes those animals, driven away in the above mentioned ceremony, to these boulders and turns them into pictures, while the animals themselves are sent further west to a place in Waigal (Waigal was just a far away place for Sumal Beg. Balumain is living there, he told). Sumal Beg also mentioned that in 'olden days' the Kalash ran up to this place when driving away the wild animals. When asked about those rock pictures which we wanted to find when started our little journey - the rock pictures in the above mentioned happening of older times - Sumal Beg told me that these pictures were not there, they were far away in the mountains, nobody had seen them so far.

The secrets of one of the beliefs of Kalash religion could not be disclosed. But all the information collected indicated that the term 'hunting-magic' for an interpretation of the rock pictures in

this area was wrong: wild goats, as the main object of rock engravings, can be found all over the Hindukush area, and usually these engravings are concentrated in specific places. One of the most famous is Saymaly Tash in Ferghana. The information collected from the Kalash shows us that these rock pictures are made by goat-breeders, which the Kalash are, in connection with a certain ceremony and a certain myth.

In the Gilgit Agency, a story was told about Shiri Badat, a legendary king and a rather mythical being, which must be mentioned here as a parallel. Shiri Badat was a Lord of all animals. In large stables he kept his goats. Once a holy man came to him as a guest. But Shiri Badat did not want to butcher any of his goats for him. Instead he killed a dog for his guest. When the meal was served the holy guest said: 'Chu', and immediately the slaughtered dog stood alive on the plate. And at the very moment all the animals of Shiri Badat ran away from their stables and live now as wild animals in the mountains. Shiri Badat, however, roams about and chisels rock pictures of goats. During the nights of midwinter one can hear his hammering.

## THE JOSHI OF THE KALASH

### Main Traits of the Spring Festival at Balanguru in 1948

Halfdan Siiger

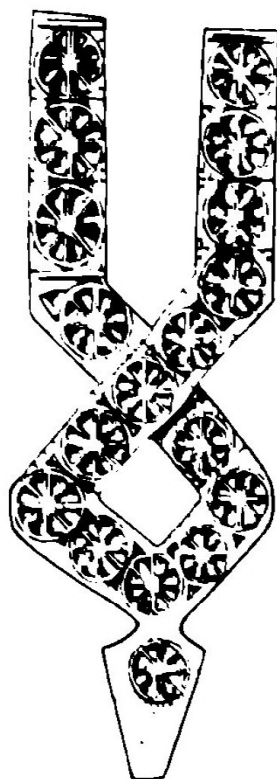
During a field research among the Kalash in 1948 the local leaders of Balanguru gave me permission to attend the great spring festival called Joshi. For some weeks Lamtson, the old leader of the festival, had given me much valuable information of what was going to take place. Lamtson had inherited this position as a leader from his father and could be trusted to be the person best acquainted with its proceedings and contents. In that way I came to know many things in advance which were later supplied when I, on permission from Lamtson and other important men, had got the opportunity of attending the main proceedings on close hands. My limited knowledge of the language enforced me to collect my information by means of Mr. Wazir Ali Shah, Secretary to His Highness the Mehtar of Chitral, who acted as a very thorough and interested interpreter. Lamtson, my main informant, came to understand the intention of my work and was eager to give all expected information about the culture and religion of his own people, in which he took great pride. But in spite of an informant's cooperative mind one cannot expect him to view the problems from the investigator's point of view. Consequently, many facts may not have been recorded with all desirable details and others may have been neglected. That is inevitable. On the other hand, my personal attendance at the main performances to a certain degree made up for these defects; but as several minor functions sometimes were going on at the same time, I lost the opportunity of observing some of them. However, I think the material is so comprehensive that I may present a survey of the main traits of the Balanguru Joshi of 1948. On another occasion a comparison with the observations made by other investigators will enable us to produce a more general survey of the Joshi of the Kalash people.<sup>1</sup>

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1) The present survey of the Joshi festival deals only with my own results obtained during my field research. Professor Morgenstierne has given a highly valuable account of the Joshi festival of 1929 (Morgenstierne 1947). For further information on the Kalash the reader is advised to consult Jones 1966, especially pp.103-108. The present author is indebted to Professor Morgenstierne for kind help and advice concerning the spelling and translation of Kalash words and sentences.

# CULTURES OF THE HINDUKUSH

SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE  
HINDU - KUSH CULTURAL CONFERENCE  
HELD AT MOESGÅRD 1970



EDITED BY  
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This photo may symbolize the Conference: From right to left Professor Georg Morgenstierne, Oslo, President of the Conference, Ahmad Ali Motamedi, Director General of the Antiquities of Afghanistan, Ahmad Yusuf Nuristani from Nisheigrom, student of the University of Kabul, sitting around a bāspē in the centre of a reconstruction of a Waigali house in the Moesgård Museum. (Photo: Preben Tolstoy 1970)





# CONTENTS

	page
INTRODUCTION (K.Jettmar) .....	IX
I. LINGUISTIC INTRODUCTION	
G.Morgenstierne: Languages of Nuristan and Surrounding Regions .....	1
II. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF NURISTAN	
K.Kristiansen: A Káfir on Káfir History and Festivals .....	11
R.F.Strand: Native Accounts of Kom History .....	22
Wazir Ali Shah: Invasions Preceding the Conquest of Nuristan .....	24
III. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF THE PRE-MUSLIM RELIGION OF NURISTAN	
Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk: The Cosmology of the Red Kafirs .....	26
G.Buddruss: Some Reflections on a Kafir Myth .....	31
W.Lentz: Western Parallels to the Deeds of Imra .....	37
K.Jettmar: Iranian Influence on the Cultures of the Hindukush .....	39
IV. CONTRIBUTIONS TO A SOCIOLOGY OF NURISTAN	
S.Jones: Kalashum Political Organisation .....	44
R.F.Strand: Principles of Kinship Organisation among the Kom Nuristani .....	51
R.F.Strand: A Note on Rank, Political Leadership and Government among the Pre-Islamic Kom .....	57
A.R.Palwal: The Kafirs' Ranks and Their Symbols .....	64
V. KALASH RELIGION AND FOLKLORE	
Wazir Ali Shah: Notes on Kalash Folklore .....	69
Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk: Kalash Mythology .....	81
P.Snoy: DIZILA WAT! .....	84
H.Siiger: The Joshi of the Kalash. Main Traits of the Spring Festival at Balangru in 1948 .....	87
A.R.Palwal: The Harvesting Festivals of the Kalash in the Birir Valley .....	93



	page
VI. CHITRAL - FOLKLORE OF THE KHO	
Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk: Chitral Folklore .....	95
Annex: Some Notes on Personality and Achievements of Shahzada Hussam-ul-Mulk (J.Pott) .....	116
VII. MATERIAL HERITAGE AND THE FUTURE OF THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLES	
Wazir Ali Shah: The Future of Nuristan and Kalash Areas .....	118
L.Edelberg: The Nuristani House .....	120
L.Edelberg: The Traditional Architecture of Nuristan and Its Preservation (Clan Houses and Temples)	124
E.Hansen: Preservation of the Architectural Tradition in Nuristan .....	127
ANNEX: Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference 1970	
Participants, Lectures, Resolution .....	131
PLATES	
NOTES ON THE PLATES	
WORKS REFERRED TO IN THE VOLUME	
INDEX	
MAP by L.Edelberg (after G.Morgenstierne)	

## INTRODUCTION

Karl Jettmar

The mountain valleys south of the main range of the Hindukush and east of the Anjuman Pass belong to the most inaccessible areas of the world. They are generally much narrower at their mouths than higher up. At these embouchures it is often difficult to find a pathway beside the torrent which issues between overhanging rocks. In addition to this, the enormous rush of water during the summer months from numerous and extensive glaciers impedes communication, the bridges being shaky and easily destroyed.

To this description taken almost verbally from the first pages of Biddulph's famous book it may be added that even most of the passes across the main ridges and connecting the individual valleys are steep, difficult and open only during the short weeks of midsummer. In presenting these most outstanding geographical features the fact - not often duly recognized by the historians - can be explained why this area never formed an integral part of any of the Great Empires of Asia, and why even the most experienced conquerors, like Timur, fought here with little or no success. Only in the 19th century foreign control was established everywhere.

On the other hand, however, these valleys are near to two of the most important migration routes used by the Indo-Iranian invaders: the Oxus/Wakhan corridor in the north, and the Kabul valley in the south. Moreover, the tendency to establish time-saving connections between Central Asia and India had the consequence that some strenuous and only temporarily passable routes were used for commercial exchange and for pilgrimage.

The dominant ethnic element in these valleys are speakers of the Kafir and Dardic languages, belonging to the Indo-Iranian stock and sharing such religious traditions as we know them from the Avestan and Vedic texts. Among these mountain peoples, however, the common heritage has been re-modelled in a very peculiar way, accepting and repelling influences of foreign traditions in accord with experiences gained in their unique tremendous geographical setting.

The process of transforming and its fascinating results with its full implications for scholarship became known in Europe towards the end of the 19th century. However at this very moment the conquest by the Afghans of the last politically independant valleys and the

forcible conversion of their population to Islam seemed to destroy all hope for further investigation. Kafiristan, i.e., the Land of the Unbelievers, became Nuristan, i.e., Land of Light, and was virtually closed to all foreigners for a long time. So one got used to considering the valleys on the southern flank of the Afghan Hindukush as a lost paradise for ethnology, and to being content with the splendid material collected by Robertson, the last European visitor who in the nineties had seen this area in its full bloom - a bloom including, it is true, cruel warfare, but also sumptuous feasts of merit.

Gradually, later on in the 20th century it became evident that the over-pessimistic comments about the irreversible effects of conquest and religious conversion have been, in some respect, premature. Over the decades it became apparent that worthwhile studies could still be, and have been, undertaken in this region with notable success. A survey of their nature and their bearing on the present state of scholarship in this field seems in place here.

1. It appeared that in Nuristan proper some persons of old age remembering traditions of the pagan religion were still alive up to the fifties of the 20th century. Some of them although derided by the younger generation had, in fact, remained faithful to the creed of their ancestors. G.Buddruss had the good chance of interviewing men who were earnestly waiting for Imra's return. G.Morgenstierne, L.Edelberg and others had similar experiences with an astonishingly large number of "last Kafirs". This means that we now can work on a much broader basis of data including many mythical texts. Of course the fact that this "frozen" material had been transformed before its salvage documentation should not be ignored.

2. In a remarkably delayed process, the existence of a truly pagan people in the Hindukush, side by side with the already converted Kafirs, was perceived by ethnographers: the Kalash. They formerly populated and dominated the whole of southern Chitral, but are now restricted to three secluded valleys. Only after World War II the Kalash were thoroughly studied ethnographically. It could be shown that their religious system bears similarities to, but is not identical with, those of former Kafiristan. It, too, will be destroyed soon, and this not only through the missionary zeal of its neighbours but as much through the influence of tourism and modern development.

3. Besides the Kalash other Dardic peoples in this region who have been converted more or less completely to the Islamic Faith have preserved so many pre-Islamic traditions that an earlier religious stratum with a specific regional differentiation could be recognized

underneath the Islamic layer. As confirmed by ruined stupas, rock inscriptions and by other monuments of the past, this region had been for a long time under Buddhist domination, but this domination had been shaken off in a sort of nativistic reaction, a process which had perhaps a more than casual affinity with the rise of the reformed Bon religion in Tibet.

4. The important progress in the linguistic field achieved by Morgenstierne and others taking up his line should not be unnoted, as this will form the foundation for all further research, even in ethnographic studies.

Despite the progress in so many fields the publicity of studies undertaken in this area has been relatively restrained. The number of scholars working on relevant problems had increased considerably, but there had been no common platform for them. Moreover, the publication of the results obtained during the last decades could not keep a pace with the fast progress of investigations underway. Communication between scholars has been restricted to a mostly regional level; the most active group were our Scandinavian colleagues who were so fortunate to be led by G.Morgenstierne. The University of Århus had built up a centre for relevant ethnographic study. Here is a museum full of important objects from the Hindukush, surprisingly well fitted into the general frame of the other collections, mainly from the Nordic past.

Thus it was quite natural that our Scandinavian colleagues should take the decisive initiative for redeeming the many "Hindukushologists" from their "splendid isolation". Under Professor Morgenstierne as the chairman an Executive Committee, consisting of H.Siiger, K.Ferdinand and L.Edelberg, the last one acting as secretary, sent out invitations to the first Hindu-Kush Cultural Conference to be held at Moesgård between the 10th and 18th of November, 1970.

The list of scholars invited is given at the end of this volume; almost all participants gave one or even more lectures, and, it may be added, each took lively part in the discussions. All of us still remember the happy days of Moesgård, and we will remain thankful for the generous and cordial reception which was given to us in this charming country. It was a particularly rewarding experience to meet, among the participants, friends from Afghanistan and Pakistan, men of year-long experience in the studies we share, and others from these countries who had become experts over more recent years. They all helped us to formulate the resolution which was passed at the end of the Conference and concerned the



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